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ABSTRACT

The political learning of 2,584 children enrolled in elementary and junior high schools of southern California is explored in this report. Growth patterns of Mexican-American and Anglo-American children are studied and comparisons are made in their political orientations. Data were obtained by questionnaires administered in grades 4-8 after the general elections of 1970 and in January and February of 1971. The analysis of children's responses focused on: 1) knowledge of political information; 2) attitude toward political authority; and, 3) orientations toward citizenship role. Principal findings indicate that as a group, Mexican-American children acquire less political information than their Anglo-American counterparts whether responses are analyzed by ethnic background alone, or by ethnic background and sex, social status, and level of ability. The gap between the two ethnic groups tends to widen as children progress through the grades. Mexican-American children of lower socioeconomic status are highly cynical about responsiveness of government to their needs and anticipate unfair treatment from policemen and judges. Fewer Mexican-American children have internalized norms associated with political involvement. At certain points in the report suggestions are made to educators concerning children's curricular needs in political affairs and the unique needs of the Mexican-American child. (Author/JLB)

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND ANGLO-AMERICAN CHILDREN

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Morris G. Sica
California State College
Fullerton, California 92631

February 1972

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

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PREFACE

This report may be read in three ways. The reader whose primary interest is in the results of the investigation may wish to turn directly to Chapter V for a succinct summary of the research design and conclusions. The busy reader who would like to have more information about the theoretical background for the investigation, the research process, and the conclusions might also want to read Chapter I, the introductory pages of Chapters II, III, and IV, and the section summaries which are found within each chapter on the following pages:

Chapter II - pp. 19, 25, 33, 38;
Chapter III - pp. 62, 88;
Chapter IV - pp. 114, 132.

Other readers may want to follow the entire analysis carefully or examine selected parts of the study which present information in which they have particular interest.

Virtually every investigator has the urge to be apologetic about the work which he presents to the public because he is keenly aware of its limitations. This one is no exception. His report merely represents a first sifting through the data in which simplistic analyses are made from gross observations. Subtle relationships are difficult to perceive during the first analysis because it is not possible to consider the many observables--all at once--with a perspective that is sufficiently broad. The data must be examined again and restudied, so that if the report were to be rewritten, more accurate perceptions would be made based upon the insights and perspective derived through its first composition. While it is anticipated that the investigator will indeed follow this procedure, the practical consideration of a target date for submitting the final report necessitates its presentation at this time.

Many persons deserve recognition for their contribution to this study. The investigator conceived of this project during the summer of 1968 as a participant in the N.D.E.A. Institute in Political Science, directed by Dr. Gordon B. Cleveland, at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The staff provided valuable assistance and a critical appraisal of the proposed project. A particular debt of gratitude is owed to the children, teachers, and administrators of the several school districts for their generous cooperation. The children should be singled out for special commendation because of their interest and sincerity in responding to the items on the questionnaire.

The contributions of Dr. Bernard Kravitz; my other colleagues, Drs. Bryan Moffet and Donald Pease; and the research assistants who helped administer the questionnaires must also be

acknowledged. Other colleagues at the Computer Center and Audio-Visual Center provided valuable service. Mrs. Febe Herrera skillfully translated and administered the questionnaire in Spanish to individuals and small groups. The agile mind and skill of Mr. Charles Zimmerman provided the computer programs and the tables of data which were teased out of the computer at very odd hours. Finally, special thanks must be given to our very versatile research associate, Mrs. Elaine Hoggan, who served in a variety of capacities which included: administering questionnaires, scoring responses, coding data to be fed into the computer, constructing and mounting graphs, preparation of the manuscript, and general critic.

Summary of Report

In this report the political learning of 2,584 children who are enrolled in elementary and junior high schools of southern California is explored. Growth patterns of Mexican-American and Anglo-American children are studied and comparisons are made to discern similarities and differences in their political orientations. Data were obtained by questionnaires administered in grades four through eight after the general elections of 1970 and in January and February of 1971. The analysis of children's responses focused on 1) knowledge of political information, 2) attitude toward political authority, and 3) orientations toward the citizenship role. The principal findings indicate that as a group, Mexican-American children acquire less political information than do their Anglo-American counterparts whether responses are analyzed by ethnic background alone, or by ethnic background and sex of child, social status, and level of ability. In many instances the gap between the two ethnic groups widens as children progress through the grades. The Mexican-American children of lower socioeconomic status are highly cynical about the responsiveness of government to their needs and anticipate unfair treatment from both policemen and judges. In addition, fewer of the Mexican-American children have internalized regime norms associated with political involvement and political efficacy. At appropriate points in the report suggestions are made to educators concerning children's curricular needs in political affairs and the unique needs of the Mexican-American child.

Chapter I

THE CITIZENSHIP LEARNING OF CHILDREN

Introduction to the Study of Political Learning

This study is concerned with the political learning of children who are enrolled in elementary and junior high schools in southern California.[1] As the term political learning is used in this report, it is not limited to the concepts in civics classes usually taught in the public schools. Rather, it coincides generally with the expression, political orientation, which is used by several scholars who studied the content and the process of political socialization. David Easton refers to political orientations as the content of political learning which the older generation transmits to its young.[2] Basic political orientations include knowledge, attitudes, and values (standards of evaluation) relating to the government, the political community and the regime.

Gabriel Almond's concept of political orientation is similar to that of David Easton, but he refers to political orientations as the political culture of a society or of one of its subgroups.

> When we speak of the political culture of a society, we refer to the political system as internalized in the cognitions, feelings, and evaluations of its population.[3]

Political orientations consist of knowledge and beliefs about the political system and the members who perform various roles. The concept includes feelings about the structure and functioning of the system and the individual's perception of his own role as a participant.

Although many categories of attitude, knowledge and skill constitute a repertoire of potential responses which individuals may make in their roles as citizens, the term political learning refers to basic orientations to politics and the political system: the political culture which has (or has not) been learned. Another expression, political socialization, denotes the processes through which individuals acquire these orientations.

Study of the content of citizenship learning and the process of political socialization has intensified during recent years. The scope of these studies has been adequately presented elsewhere by scholars and need not be repeated in this report. Hyman (1959) summarized and analyzed some of the early research. Greenstein (1965) summarized approaches to the study of political learning. Dennis (1967) summarized contemporary research, developed an extensive bibliography of research on political socialization, and identified ten major problems of political socialization research. In an analytic study, Almond and Verba examined the political culture in five democracies (1965). In another analytic work, Dawson and Prewitt (1969) codified and interpreted current knowledge and theory pertaining to the content and process of political socialization. Within the decade of the 'sixties, political socialization as a field of study was advanced considerably through the basic research and theoretical contributions of Greenstein (1965), Hess and Torney (1965, 1967), and Easton and Dennis (1968).

In conducting the present study, the investigator drew freely from the works of the researchers cited above as well as others given as references. This is particularly true with respect to theoretical constructs, methodology, and instrumentation. Therefore, although any deficiencies in the research are entirely his own responsibility, indebtedness to the significant contributions of the aforementioned pioneers in the field of political socialization is acknowledged at this place in the report to reduce the number of references to their works which would ordinarily be required. It is hoped that this procedure will conserve space for the essence of this report and make it more easily read. Since the study parallels to some extent a portion of the research reported by Fred Greenstein in 1965, particular recognition is accorded to his work.

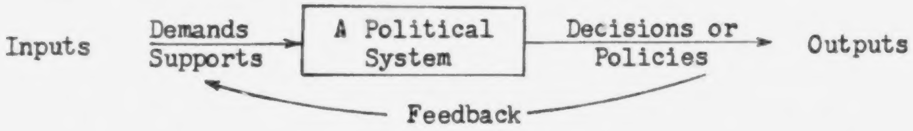
The Study of Orientations to the Political Culture

Although the terms political orientation and political culture are not precise, they are useful for designating the general content or products of political socialization. However, the study of political culture requires a scheme for categorizing orientations so that research and discussion can proceed systematically within an analytic framework. Two systems for classifying orientations and the kinds of political objects toward which they are directed were found to be helpful. One is presented by Easton and Hess[4] and the other is described by Almond and Verba[5]. Both schemes have many important features in common which are useful for the analysis of data; therefore, only one will be described in more detail.

David Easton identifies three levels of the political system which are the objects of political orientations: 1) the government, which consists of the incumbent authorities; 2) the regime, which includes the structures and rules through which authorities perform their roles; and 3) the political community, consisting of persons and groups who are bound together by shared attitudes and values. Three categories of psychological orientations are directed toward the three levels of the political system: knowledge, attitudes, and values (actually standards of evaluation). When the three levels of the political system are juxtaposed with the three categories of orientations along two dimensions, they form a matrix of nine cells:

	Psychological Orientations		
Political Objects	Knowledge	Attitudes	Values
Government			
Regime			
Political Community			

In his approach to the analysis of political systems, David Easton presents a conceptualization of a functioning system which includes a flow of inputs into the system and the outputs which emerge.[6] Inputs consist of demands, support, or lack or support. Some of the demands are transformed by governmental processes into outputs of services, decisions or policies which when effectuated are laws and regulations that are undergirded by the several enforcement agencies. The loop is completed when communications are fed back into the system concerning the effects of outputs. This information may consist of new demands, indications of support, or signs of withdrawal of system support:



Gabriel Almond employs three useful concepts in characterizing the political culture of a society or of subgroups within it: parochial, subject, and participant.[7] Where individuals have little or no awareness of specialized political objects or roles and expect little change or benefit from the political system, they are designated as parochial. Parochial orientations are likely to exist in tribal groups although individuals with such orientations may be found in highly politicized societies. The second type of political culture described by Almond involves people who are aware of specialized aspects of the political system and the variety of roles within it, but who are only concerned passively with administrative outputs of the system. This is the subject role in which the individual is oriented primarily toward the laws, regulations, services or special benefits that are to be derived from the system.

The participant political culture is the third category which is identified. The members of this type of political culture are positively oriented toward the political system, and they conceive of themselves as participants who possess the competence to influence the flow and processing of input demands within the system as well as the disposition to obey the decisions which are its outputs. The participant culture is not set apart from the parochial and the subject but may be considered as an amalgamation of the three categories. The participant political culture is the vital component of a stable, functioning democracy. Indeed, the political culture of a society in which the formal institutions of democracy (which might include, for example, universal suffrage or an elected legislature) are accompanied by a congruent participant culture, is designated by Almond as the civic culture.[8]

Gabriel Almond's scheme for analysis was employed in a recent investigation of the political culture of democracy, its supporting structures, and the social processes which undergird it. After an intensive study of elements of the political culture in five nations--United States, Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Mexico--the political culture which is found in the United States was designated as the one which closely approximates the civic culture.[9]

In this country a general balance exists among the roles of participant, subject and parochial, with slightly greater emphasis placed on the participant and less stress given to the subject role. In comparison with the other four nations, respondents in the United States report more frequent exposure to politics, participation in political discussions, and involvement in voluntary organizations, political affairs and community activities. They also report more frequently feelings of pride in the political system and confidence in their ability to influence the government. While Americans may become emotionally involved in campaigns, they do not reject the concept of political opposition. They are attached to the system and are satisfied in general with government performance.

In comparison with other nations there is reported more frequently a sense of social trust and confidence in fellow citizens which leads Americans to cooperate in informal groups and organizations to achieve political ends. On the measures of subject competence, however, Americans drop below Britain and Germany in expectations of consideration by bureaucratic or police authority. They feel more competent in political than in bureaucratic contexts, although the latter seem related to the former: those who feel competent politically also seem able to cope with bureaucratic authority.

Although the insights which emerge from investigation of the political culture of the five nations are of great value in advancing scholarship in the field of comparative politics, it should be recognized that the study treated the United States as a country that is ethnically homogeneous.[10] The political orientations of minority subgroups were not examined, although important analyses were made of special categories of respondents according to their level of education, social status, sex, and religious affiliation. The question which suggests itself is whether or not members of an ethnic subgroup such as the Mexican-American community might report attitudes that are different from those of other Americans.

Rationale for Study of the Socialization Needs of a Subgroup

Within the United States in recent years the many grievances of special subgroups have been brought to the attention of the general public vividly through the activities of the Negro civil rights movements, the 'Student Revolt', the Mexican-American action groups, the women's liberation movement, and many other activist associations. Certain grievances are common to several of the protest movements. In particular, members of minority groups feel that they are prevented from participating effectively in the political process and are not allocated a fair share of resources by political authorities.[11]

Some leaders and spokesmen for groups within the Mexican-American community feel that their people fulfill the subject rather than the participant role, and even within this role they are discriminated against socially, economically, and politically. This view is not consistent with the report published by the investigators of the civic culture of five nations which suggests that in the United States there is a general balance among the three roles: participant, subject and parochial. From the point of view of spokesmen for some of the Mexican-Americans, what seems to be characteristic of the political culture of the dominant Anglo-American society is not at all true for the Mexican-American community.

Although some members of the Mexican-American community hold the Anglo-Americans responsible for their weak political and economic position, they also recognize that a large proportion of their people are not politically cohesive, active, and skilled in partisan politics. Through a variety of socialization procedures such as political seminars, participation in political campaigns, political communications in newspapers and magazines, organizations of clubs and action groups, and school and college assistance programs, an attempt is being made to develop among a larger group of Mexican-Americans the political orientations that are necessary for competing successfully in politics. It is likely that future generations of children will also benefit from these activities because the family is in an excellent position to transmit these learnings to the young.

However, although self-effort is important, the Mexican-American community needs assistance. While the family and other private groups within the community can influence the development of children's political orientations, the educational system is another agency of socialization which can help accomplish this task. The public school is in a unique position to assist all children in acquiring relevant political orientations, but in particular it can help the Mexican-American child. To a large degree the school already fulfills this function, but it can assume a more significant role if programs were developed which are adapted to the special citizenship needs of children. It is anticipated that these needs can be identified through the research process; therefore, this investigation seeks to provide a portion of the fund of information which will be of value to educators in developing effective programs for children.

This study will proceed along two avenues of inquiry. One will explore the political orientations of children and describe the changes which take place at successive grade levels. Another will compare the political orientations of Mexican-American and Anglo-American children to observe similarities and differences at successive grade levels. Since this type of study is diagnostic in nature, it can help identify special areas for curriculum development in schools to meet the citizenship needs of both groups of children. But it can also point out whether or not there are aspects of the political culture in which the socialization of Mexican-American children lags behind that of the Anglo-American. If citizenship needs are identified which are unique to the Mexican-American child, educators can create and emphasize the curricular experiences which will enhance his ability to participate effectively in political processes.

Since this study seeks to assess needs and explore children's development at successive grade levels, little attention can be given to discovering or explaining why differences between ethnic groups might occur. It would doubtless be futile to try to trace any variations among ethnic groups to genetic differences or to the elements of basic value systems within cultures.[12] Although the social scientist might be interested in such investigations, there is little point in the educator's pursuing this avenue of research because (1) our society expects schools to promote citizenship, (2) the public school is committed (at least verbally) to providing equal opportunity for the education of all children and compensatory education for some, and (3) when children are assigned to a school for instruction, the only professional alternative is to diagnose the curricular needs of individuals and then attempt to find the best ways of communicating with them. The results obtained through this survey should provide helpful information about children's needs so that teachers might utilize the professional approach in fulfilling their responsibility to children as well as to society.

Citizenship Education and the Public Schools

Any suggestion that the public school concern itself with the political orientations of children raises many questions. Two are of particular concern: 1) should schools become involved in politics; and 2) are children in elementary and junior high schools mature enough to study political processes. Except in perhaps a few isolated and extremely homogeneous communities, the school is expected to be "neutral" with respect to partisan politics and, at least in domestic affairs, most schools probably try to fulfill this expectation. Partisan loyalties and dispositions to participate in politics (or not to participate) appear to be developed primarily through the family rather than through the public schools (Hyman, 1959; Greenstein, 1965; Hess and Torney, 1967; Easton and Dennis, 1968).

But education has traditionally been used as an instrument for the civic training of children and youth. The development of public education in the United States, particularly during the latter part of the 19th century, was very much influenced by the nation's requirements for 'trained' citizens. As a result of this interest, citizenship education has been concerned with having children acquire basic skills in reading and writing, ideological orientations appropriate for the republic, and information about various aspects of government. In addition to this citizen role, instruction has also been concerned with the subject role: loyalty to the nation, obedience to lawful authorities, and a disposition to accept the legitimacy of governmental institutions. On the other hand, little attention is given to the performance of specialized roles such as legislator or party member except in a superficial manner when children are allowed to participate in student government, committees, or mock elections. Few curriculum guides and materials are concerned with allocative politics: a study of the ways individuals and groups acquire a share of valued things through governmental decisions.

It is not likely that the schools would be allowed to be other than politically "neutral" even if school authorities wanted to change. But it is evident that schools are already concerned with developing children's political orientations, although many important political topics and issues are excluded from the curriculum. Information about the question of whether or not children are mature enough to be concerned with the study of political processes will be presented in the next section of this discussion. However, preliminary results from the present study indicate that some children become involved in politics at an early age. A sample of some partisan and participatory activities during an election campaign is given below. These examples show the range and types of activities in which a few children are engaged even before they take a formal course in American government:

> I went to the convention.
> I worked for the party.
> I looked up phone numbers for a candidate.
> I helped my Dad give out information.
> I wrote to the Senate.
> I went from door to door.
> I made stickers for a candidate and went to a rally.
> I tried to convince people.
> I influenced some people to vote for my candidate.
> I got my parents to vote.
> I argued with my Grandfather.
> I tore up the opposition's billboard.

In a later chapter, analyses will be made of children's partisan orientations and participatory activities, but these few selected responses indicate that while some children are just involved passively in elections by wearing campaign buttons or items of adornment, others work actively at the precinct level in nonglamorous but essential aspects of American-style campaigns. A few become highly involved emotionally in efforts to either win support for their candidate or defeat his opponent.

The Purpose of This Study and Research Background

This investigation is concerned chiefly with Mexican-American and Anglo-American children in grades four through eight. The purpose of the study is to compare the citizenship learning of children of the two ethnic groups, discern areas of similarity and difference in their political orientations, and describe the changes which take place as children advance through the elementary and junior high school grades. How this information might be of value to the schools and other agencies concerned with the socialization of children has already been discussed briefly. Additional suggestions for the use of results will be given at appropriate places in the body of the report and in the summary chapter.

Results of studies made of political activity among adults of the several social classes have been relatively consistent: the lower the socioeconomic status of the individual, the less likely he is to be politically active and involved in community activities. On the other hand, nationwide studies of over 12,000 elementary school children by Easton and Hess indicate that political orientations develop early among middle class children. These learnings appear to be acquired mainly through the family.

> Every piece of evidence indicates that the child's political world begins to take shape well before he even enters elementary school and that it undergoes the most rapid change during these years.[13]

These findings which were confirmed by later studies suggest an important question about socialization: how can the lower class child acquire appropriate citizenship learning when his parents may be politically apathetic?

Hess and Torney analyzed the development of political attitudes of children in grades two through eight. While they found that support for government and acceptance of authority and law did not vary with social class and intelligence, active participation and interest in politics were indeed strongly affected by these variables.[14] They suggest that little change in attitude is likely to occur during the later adolescent and adult years, and since many children of lower social status and academic performance will drop out of school early, the elementary school must face the challenge of promoting civic education.[15]

Greenstein compared children of lower and upper socioeconomic status in New Haven, Connecticut.[16] He found differences between the social classes in several aspects of political learning. One conclusion he reached is that social class differences in children's political orientations coincide with social status variations in adult political participation:

> Lower and upper socioeconomic status children differ in the same ways as do their elders on a good number of the indicators of political awareness and involvement used in New Haven...[17]

Reported in this study was evidence of greater growth in the part of children of upper socioeconomic status in awareness of informal aspects of politics. However, there were found to be little or no differences between upper and lower status groups in awareness of information about government, such as what a mayor does or how a bill becomes a law. On the whole, upper class children appeared to have a more realistic view of politics and the political process than did children of lower social status.

Although social class differences were of considerable interest to Hess and Torney in their study of the development of children's political attitudes, ethnicity was not. Hence at the time of their investigation, they did not include large samples of children drawn from ethnic subgroups which might differ from the Anglo-American culture in political socialization.[18] On the other hand, in the Greenstein study the children were predominantly of European ancestry and represented ethnic groups which had already been absorbed into American political life: English, Irish, Italian, Jewish, East European, and "mixed." Since the composition of the sample included only a small proportion of children from minority groups, the need for additional studies of ethnic groups is evident. If one were to center his attention on Spanish surnamed Americans only, and more particularly on Mexican-American children, would the results of research in political learning be similar to the findings reported above? It is reasonable to suppose that the gap between the social classes might be even greater with the introduction of this additional attribute.[19] This supposition can be phrased as a threefold question through which the investigation may be pursued: Are there differences between Mexican-American and Anglo-American children with respect to

1) knowledge of political information,
2) feeling about political authority,
3) orientations toward the citizenship role?

In seeking answers to this question, the investigator will be able to describe how membership in either a minority or a dominant group affects the citizenship learning of children. Information will also be available about whether or not the initial similarities or differences between the two subgroups which might be found in the early school grades remain constant or change at successive grade levels. Finally, the results of this analysis could suggest important and unique curricular needs of children.

The Scope and Method of This Investigation

This study takes place in parts of three counties of Southern California: Orange, Riverside and Los Angeles. In this geographic area great changes have taken place in the last three decades in economic development, population growth, and the general manner of living. Within the area included in this study may be found strawberry fields, vineyards, orange groves, cattle and horse ranches, national forests, vast shopping centers which include department store chains and discount houses, and huge technological complexes in which the most sophisticated electronic equipment, spacecraft and airplanes are engineered. Some people live in expensive hilltop, custom-built homes, complete with swimming pool and horse corral; others live in upper income tract homes; many live in older and more modest tract homes; and some live in older sections of communities labeled barrios. For the most part the people who live in the barrios have Spanish surnames and are generally designated as Mexican-American. Within the older tract homes may be found mixtures of Mexican-Americans, blacks, and lower income white families.

The requirements of this investigation made it necessary to include children who are disparate in ethnic background; therefore, the sample is not representative of the general population of elementary and junior high school children in the United States or even in California. The sample had to be drawn from neighborhoods and schools which included relatively high proportions of Mexican-Americans. As a consequence, the proportion of children from lower middle class and lower status neighborhoods is very high.

While the research findings are probably generalizable to the ethnic and social status groups included in the sample, such inferences should also be made cautiously because within school districts administrators had to be both interested and willing to have children participate in this delicate area of research before survey teams were allowed to enter classrooms. Because of a variety of understandable and good reasons, some districts and local school principals chose not to take part in the study. However, the research is based upon a relatively large sample consisting of 2,584 children from 28 elementary, intermediate, and junior high schools.

The instrument which was used in the study is a modification of the questionnaires and item types employed by Greenstein (1965) and Robert D. Hess and his associates[20]. After items which were potentially serviceable were selected, some were revised to meet the requirements of this study. A rough draft of the instrument was pretested under local school conditions to discern needed revisions and to perfect the administration procedures. Children, teachers, administrators and other school district personnel made valuable suggestions which were subsequently incorporated into the final version of the instrument.

The questionnaire was administered after the general elections of 1970 during the months of November, December, January and February* in grades four through eight, inclusive. In administering the questionnaire, establishing rapport with children was of utmost concern. There were no names written on the instrument; children were informed that they were not taking a test and that their responses would not be seen by school officials. The purpose of the study was explained as an attempt to gather information which would be used later in the development of curricula and materials which could help make the social studies more relevant to the needs of children.

The questionnaire was administered to children as a group within each classroom. In all grades the items were read aloud by the person who was administering the questionnaire. In most instances the teacher was present, but he remained discreetly in the background. At the fourth and fifth grade levels an assistant was usually present to help administer the instruments. A member of the team who could speak Spanish fluently was usually available to help with problems of translation in instances where a child could not comprehend English well.[21]

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*January and February of 1971

Notes

1. Since politics and the word political have pejorative connotations in American society, the term citizenship learning, rather than political learning, was often employed in communications with school districts. Promoting democratic citizenship is acknowledged by educational authorities as an important objective of the school, which means of course that particular political orientations in children must be developed.

2. David Easton and Robert Hess, "The Child's Political World," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, VI (1962), p. 230.

3. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture*, (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Co., 1965), p. 13.

4. Easton and Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

5. Almond and Verba, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

6. David Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems," *World Politics*, IX (April 1957), pp. 383-400 ff.

7. Almond and Verba, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-26 ff.

8. Ibid., p. 30.

9. Ibid., pp. 313-315.

10. This does not imply that the investigators were not aware of ethnic subgroups. Their interest was primarily in a national cross-section sample for the purpose of making comparisons among nations.

11. Henry M. Ramirez, head of the Mexican-American Studies Division of the Civil Rights Commission and also President Nixon's announced appointee for the chairmanship of the Committee on Opportunities for Spanish Speaking People, believes that his main job is to help Americans of Spanish descent achieve "greater parity in delivery of resources and placement of personnel," (*Los Angeles Times*, August 6, 1971, Pt. I, p. 8).

12. Nick C. Vaca reviewed the consequences of the social scientists' use of cultural determinist as well as genetic approaches to the study of Mexican-Americans. His conclusions are thought-provoking: "For like biological determinism, cultural determinism again afforded the scientific evidence to place blame for poor academic achievement upon the shoulders of the Mexican-American," ("The Mexican-American in the Social Sciences," *El Grito*, IV (Fall 1970), p. 21).

13. Easton and Hess, op. cit., p. 235.

14. Robert Hess and Judith Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1967), p. 171.

15. Ibid.

16. Fred Greenstein, Children and Politics, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), pp. viii-199.

17. Ibid., p. 105

18. Hess and Torney, op. cit., p. 230.

19. This additional attribute, membership in a minority group, is difficult to pinpoint. These children are often said to belong to the Mexican-American subculture. But of course to the extent that Mexican-American children are socialized simultaneously into at least two subcultures they should more properly be referred to as bicultural.

20. A copy of the questionnaire used by Robert Hess and his associates is deposited as Document No. 9365, ADI Auxilliary Publications Project, Photo Duplication Service, Library of Congress.

21. Children who were identified early as not being able to comprehend English well enough were sometimes administered the questionnaire separately by the translator. In instances where no translator was available, no data is available for the child.

Chapter II

ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL INFORMATION

Cognition and Citizenship Behavior

Cognitive political orientations within the participant culture include information about the nature of its institutions, understanding of the functions of the several levels of government, and awareness of the role of leaders who govern. The competent citizen is reasonably well informed about processes of government. If he is to participate effectively on the input side of the political process, he must be aware of some of the points of contact and channels through which system demands flow. He must also understand the functions of the several levels of government and anticipate the kinds of results which might be derived through efforts to influence each.

In order to vote intelligently, the adult must acquire information about the candidates by reading announcements, by following the news media, or through discussions with relatives, friends, or co-workers. Since the adult is also likely to be a taxpayer, authoritative decisions at all levels of government impinge upon him forcefully; therefore, some interest and participation in political input activity will probably be generated along with general compliance with system outputs. Knowledge about the functioning of the political system will grow and take on new significance as the adult assumes economic and family roles and becomes involved directly in political experience.[1] However, for the child the situation is quite different.

In considering the citizenship learning of children, one must recognize that the child functions more in the subject than in the participant role. Most of the direct experience he has with authorities involves compliance with system outputs. Information about government and the flow of inputs into the system is acquired indirectly from family conversations, discussions with friends, classroom instruction, examination of news media, or from contact with other agencies of socialization. Since the child cannot participate directly in the political process, one may judge whether he is beginning to assume the citizen role by his fund of information about government, executives, and legislators.

On the questionnaire, children were asked several sets of questions designed to reveal the amount of information which they possess about institutions at three levels of government: local, state, and national.[2] They were also asked to name executives and give at least one function of each. They reported whether or not they are aware of one or more legislative bodies and were asked to write the name of one member of each group. Besides recalling the names of officials they were also requested to describe a function of each legislative body. It is recognized that such questions as these can tap only a limited amount of information about government; nevertheless they do provide insight into children's cognitive orientations to the political system.

The findings are reported in this chapter in graphic form. Percentages of response are presented by grade level and by ethnic group simultaneously in order to detect patterns of growth in information as children proceed through the grades and at the same time discern differences between the development of Mexican-American and Anglo-American children. Throughout this report basic analyses will be made first by grade level and by ethnic group. Then, further and more intensive analyses of data will be made according to such attributes as sex of child, social status, and level of academic performance.

Ethnic Group Differences in Political Information

One indicator of the political awareness of children is their ability to recall the names of incumbent executives at several levels of government. Figure 1 shows the percent of children by grade and ethnic group who are able to state the name of the President of the United States, the governor of California, and the mayors of their respective communities. The percentages of Mexican-American children who can name the several executives are generally lower at all grade levels than those of the Anglo-American children, although in the case of the mayor the differences are insignificant. The President appears to have a high degree of prominence in the orientations of both groups. If we take the 50% level as an index of significant awareness, the children of each ethnic group surpass the index at all grade levels.[3]

The governor occupies a middle position of awareness among the executives. At the fourth and fifth grades, both ethnic groups report his name with almost equal frequency, but in the succeeding grades Anglo-American children surpass the Mexican-American group.[4] Growth among the Anglo-Americans proceeds steadily throughout the grades and surpasses the 50% level of awareness after the fifth grade while percentages reported by Mexican-Americans remain relatively constant close to the 50% index of awareness. Whereas in the fifth grade both groups report the governor's name with almost equal frequency, at the eighth grade Mexican-American children do not reach the achievement level of sixth grade Anglo-Americans. On the other hand, the mayor is virtually unknown to both groups, and there is almost no growth in ability to identify him as the children proceed through the grades. Eighth graders have little more knowledge than the children who are approximately four years younger and have half of their schooling.

Another indication of political awareness is the child's ability to identify correctly an executive's role. On the questionnaire children were asked to write one function for each executive: the President, the governor and the mayor. Replies were coded in three categories: blank or incorrect, partial or vague concept of the role, and clearly correct. The category "clearly correct" should be understood to mean reasonably accurate, because interpretations of the child's responses often had to be made during the scoring process.

Figure 2 shows the percent of children by grade and ethnic group who are able to describe functions of the several executives. For each one of the executives, the percentages for the Mexican-American children are lower than the frequencies reported by the Anglo-American. While the President's role appears to have the greatest degree of prominence for both groups, the 50% level of significant awareness is closely approximated only by Anglo-American children at the sixth grade, and it is surpassed by them at the seventh and eighth. The Mexican-American children do not achieve the 50% level at any grade; indeed, the percentage of eighth graders who can define the President's role is roughly equivalent to that of the fourth and fifth grade Anglo-American children. The role of the governor occupies the middle position of awareness for both ethnic groups, but for neither group does the percentage of children who report a gubernatorial function accurately approach the 50% index of awareness. The relatively small percentages of children who can identify the mayor's role is a further indication of his lack of prominence among children of this age group.

Several additional measures of political information which are employed in this study involve awareness of institutions at different levels of government, recalling the name of a member of each institution, and describing one function of each. First, children were asked to indicate whether they had ever heard of the Senate or House of Representatives*, the California State Legislature, and the city council of their local community. The results are reported in Figure 3 by grade and ethnic group. For each level of government the percentages of Mexican-American children who report awareness of the respective institutions are lower than those of the Anglo-American, and the differences become greater in the upper grades.

The state legislature seems to have the highest degree of prominence during the early grades among children of each ethnic group, but it is surpassed by Congress at the later grades. For both groups, awareness of the state legislature levels off after the sixth grade; however, the frequency with which eighth grade Mexican-American children report awareness is equivalent to that of fourth grade Anglo-Americans. The differences between the

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*In the ensuing pages the term Congress will be used to designate both the Senate and House of Representatives.

FIGURE 1

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF EXECUTIVES

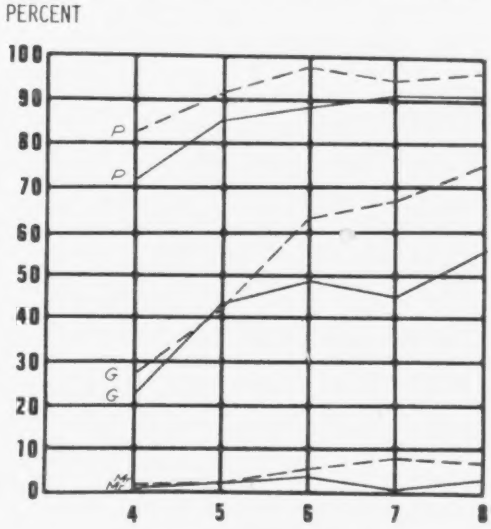


FIGURE 2

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF EXECUTIVES

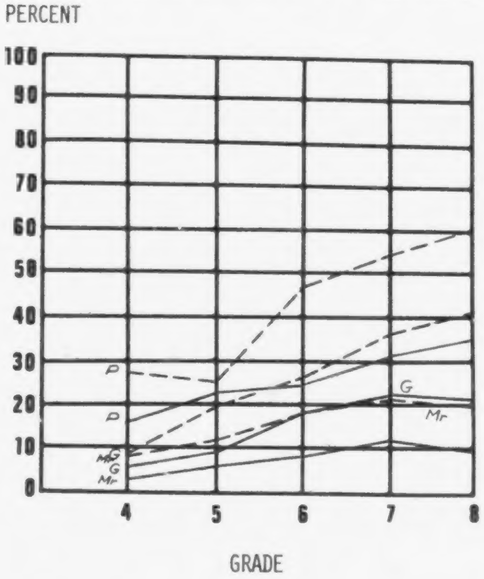
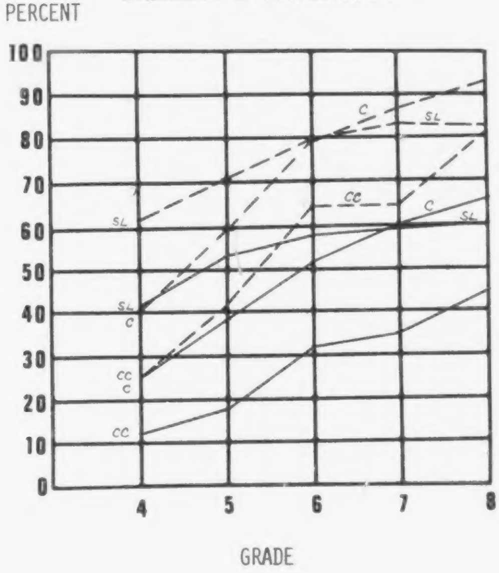


FIGURE 3

CHILDREN REPORTING
AWARENESS OF INSTITUTIONS



KEY TO FIGURES

———	MEXICAN-AMERICAN
- - -	ANGLO-AMERICAN
P	PRESIDENT
G	GOVERNOR
Mr	MAYOR
C	CONGRESS
SL	STATE LEGISLATURE
CC	CITY COUNCIL
M	MALE
F	FEMALE
H	HIGH
A	AVERAGE
L	LOW

FIGURE 4

CHILDREN REPORTING
THE NAME OF LEGISLATORS

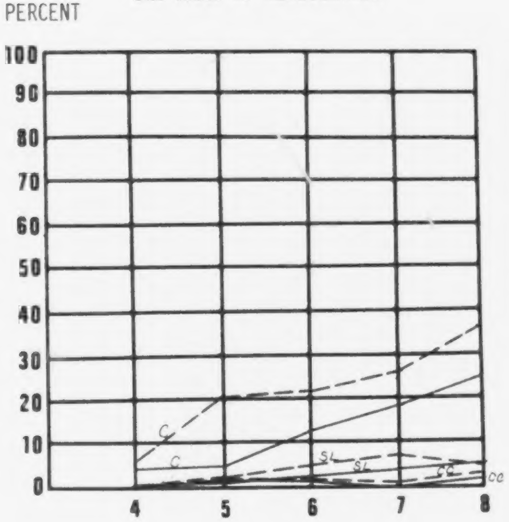


FIGURE 5

CHILDREN REPORTING
THE FUNCTION OF INSTITUTIONS

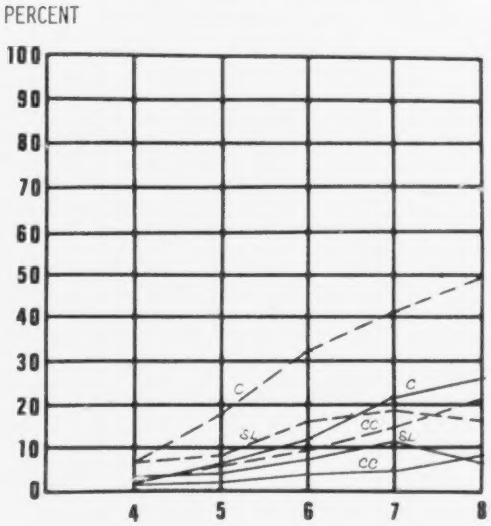


FIGURE 6

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME
OF THE PRESIDENT, BY SEX OF CHILD

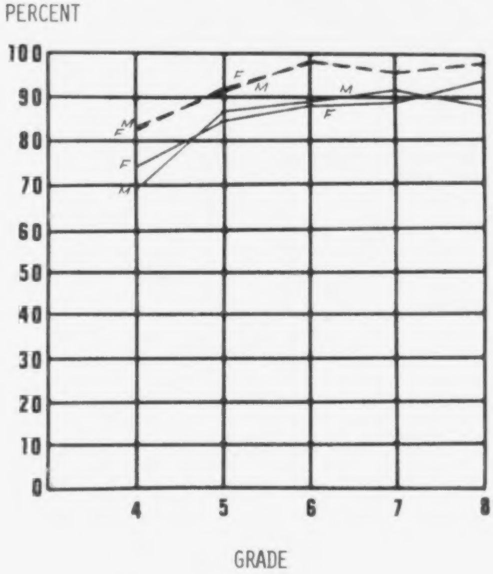
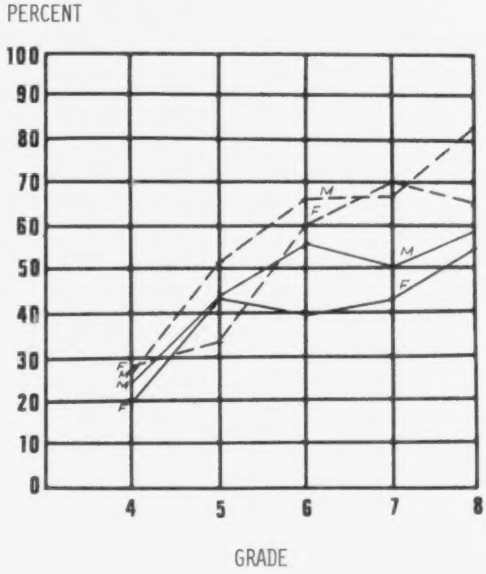


FIGURE 7

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME
OF THE GOVERNOR, BY SEX OF CHILD



two groups are striking. Awareness of Congress rises continuously for both groups, but differences become greater at the upper grade levels. The city council occupies the lowest position for children of each ethnic group but the curve of growth appears to accelerate faster for the Anglo-Americans who, at the fifth grade level, are just a few percentage points below eighth grade Mexican-Americans. At the junior high school grades, all three levels of government have been heard of more frequently by Anglo-Americans than by Mexican-Americans.

The index indicating significant awareness of the three levels of government is attained by most children by the sixth grade, but very few children are then able to describe the functions of the legislative bodies. Even fewer are able to name legislators. On the questionnaire, children were asked to supply the names of one member of the Congress, the state legislature, and the local city council; the results are shown in Figure 4. For children of each ethnic group, the names of members of Congress are reported most frequently, and while both curves rise steadily the greater frequencies are reported at each grade level by Anglo-Americans. However, the 50% index of awareness is not attained at any grade level. For all grade groups the names of the state legislators and local city councilmen are virtually unknown!

However, when children are asked to state a function of each institution of government, the results are much better. Figure 5 shows that for each level of government the percentages of Mexican-American children who can describe one function are generally lower than those of the Anglo-American. While children of both groups are able to describe the function of Congress most frequently, the 50% level of awareness is approximated only at the eighth grade by Anglo-Americans. As the two groups proceed through the grades, however, the divergence becomes greater and the eighth grade Mexican-American children report the role of the Congress with less frequency than do sixth grade Anglo-Americans.

For children of each ethnic group, the state legislature occupies the middle position in frequency of response, and the city council is lowest. While knowledge about the function of the city council increases steadily for both groups, information about the role of the state legislature does not. The curves depicting knowledge about the state legislature take the same form for each group: the graphs reach a peak at the seventh grade and then decrease in the eighth.

Section Summary

There are clearly defined differences between children of the two ethnic groups in awareness of the President, governor and Congressmen. Although the Anglo-Americans lead throughout the grades in the frequency with which they name the President, his prominence is consistently high for both groups; the responses of Mexican-Americans merely lag behind. In the case of Congressmen the frequencies are generally smaller, and the responses of Mexican-Americans are again lower. But while children are at first at about the same level in the frequency with which they name the governor, changes which occur in the later grades suggest that the socialization agencies have a differential effect on each ethnic group over the years. Since the mayor, state legislators, and city councilmen are virtually unknown to both groups of children, an important instructional need is evident. Although the responses of the Anglo-American children are higher in frequency than those of the Mexican-American with regard to knowledge of the roles of executives and the functions of institutions, the degree of their awareness is not particularly high for important aspects of government such as these; therefore, the need for special instruction in state and local government is again apparent.

Sex Differences in Political Information

In the first section of Chapter II, analyses were made of cognitive aspects of the political culture to discern ethnic group differences in political orientations as children proceed through the elementary and junior high school grades. However, gross analyses of the composite responses of ethnic groups do not take into consideration the variability that might exist within each subculture. More precise analyses of differences between ethnic groups can be made when data are classified by such additional attributes as sex of child, social status, and level of academic performance. In the sections which follow, responses will be analyzed first by sex of child, then by social status, and finally by general academic performance.

Although societies vary in the status which they accord females, women in America are legally entitled to full citizenship. As citizens they are ascribed equal status with males and are expected to fulfill the role of participant in the political process, even though officially and unofficially they may sometimes encounter discrimination or perhaps deference; e.g., not subject to compulsory military service. Nevertheless, in spite of ascribed equality of status, differences between the sexes often appear not only in certain of their responses to questionnaire items but also in their actual political behavior.[5]

The fact that males are more oriented to politics than are females has been attributed partly to differences in child socialization. Although the family's function in child socialization is shared by other agencies, its position in the socialization process is first and most important.[6] It is not only foremost during the early childhood years in shaping the child's sex role behavior, but it is also significant during these years in transmitting (or failing to transmit) political orientations.[7] Since the present study seeks to discern the effect of membership in different subcultures on the political orientations of children, it is appropriate to inquire further about whether or not differences that are found in the political orientations of the two ethnic groups also appear as differences between the sexes. For example, are the responses of Mexican-American girls different from those of the Anglo-American girls and Mexican-American boys?

Figures 6, 7 and 8 show the percent of children by grade, ethnic background and sex who are able to state the names of the President, the governor, and the mayor of their respective communities. The reader will recall from the previous section that for children of both ethnic groups the chief executive has great prominence, but the percentages reported by Anglo-Americans are consistently higher. When the responses of children are classified by sex as well as by ethnic background the index of significant awareness again is surpassed by all groups but ethnic differences are still evident. While the differences are not very large, both sexes of Anglo-Americans report percentages that are consistently higher than those reported by both sexes of Mexican-Americans. Thus, there appear to be factors associated with the ethnic background of the children rather than with their sex which explain variations.[8]

Awareness of the governor does not appear as early as knowledge about the President, and it does not reach as high a degree of prominence. Anglo-American males and females surpass the index of significant awareness, respectively, at grades five and six. The Mexican-American males surpass the level of significant awareness at grade six, but the females do not attain this level until grade eight. Males and females of each ethnic group are very much alike in the fourth grade, but at the sixth a distinct pattern emerges: Anglo-American children of both sexes surpass the Mexican-American, and the girls of the latter group lag behind. While it would also be of value to compare the male and female responses concerning the awareness of the mayor, they are too few for reliable analysis. Therefore, it can just be asserted that the local mayors are virtually unknown to children in elementary and junior high schools.

Both male and female Anglo-American children have better understanding of the role of the President than do the Mexican-American children of both sexes, and in particular the Anglo-American girls achieve superiority at an early age. Figure 9 shows that Anglo-American girls report knowledge of the President's functions with greater accuracy than do the males at all grade levels. The females surpass the 50% index at the sixth, seventh and eighth grades, while the males approximate this index at the seventh grade but do not surpass it until the eighth. The Mexican-American children do not achieve the 50% index at any grade level but the girls demonstrate a slight advantage at the fourth, fifth, and eighth grades. Although ethnicity still appears to be dominant insofar as differences in reporting the President's role is concerned, sex of child clearly seems to be another influencing factor among Anglo-Americans. It is noteworthy that the Anglo-American girls demonstrate superiority in describing the functions of the chief executive, although their ability to recall his name is equal to that of the males.

Figure 10 shows that at grade four males and females are very much alike in understanding the governor's functions, but thereafter Anglo-American males indicate a slight superiority which is maintained throughout all grades. However, the index of significant awareness is not attained by any group. Anglo-American boys report with greater frequency than the Mexican-American boys knowledge about the governor's role, and the pattern of response is similar for the females of each ethnic group. At grades seven and eight, Anglo-Americans of both sexes report greater percentages than do the Mexican-Americans and the responses for girls within the latter group are lowest in frequency. Anglo-American children report knowledge of the mayor's functions with greater frequency than do the Mexican-American, although the mayor does not loom very large in prominence for the sample as a whole. The graphs in Figure 11 indicate that males of each ethnic group show greater understanding of the mayor's role than do the females.

Figures 12, 13 and 14 show, respectively, the percent of children who report awareness of Congress, the state legislature, and the local city council classified by grade, ethnic group membership and sex of the child. The differences between the two ethnic groups which may be observed clearly suggest that the sex of the child is less plausible as an explanation of differences between groups than is ethnicity. In each of the graphs Anglo-American children of both sexes report awareness of institutions with greater frequency than do the Mexican-American. Although differences between the sexes are small, within each ethnic group boys report greater frequencies than do girls--except at grade eight.

With regard to Congress, the index of significant awareness is approximated and surpassed, respectively, by Anglo-American females and males at the fifth grade. This level of achievement is delayed for Mexican-American girls and boys who approximate and surpass it at the sixth grade. Significant awareness of the state legislature appears later than for Congress. Anglo-Americans of both sexes surpass the index at the sixth grade, but this is not achieved by either Mexican-American boys or girls by grade eight. With regard to the city council, the Anglo-Americans of both sexes achieve the index of significant awareness at the fourth grade, but this achievement is delayed until the fifth grade for Mexican-Americans.

It was pointed out previously that scarcely any children could supply the names of members of the state legislature or local city councilmen; therefore no further analyses of the

FIGURE 8

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME
OF THE MAYOR, BY SEX OF CHILD

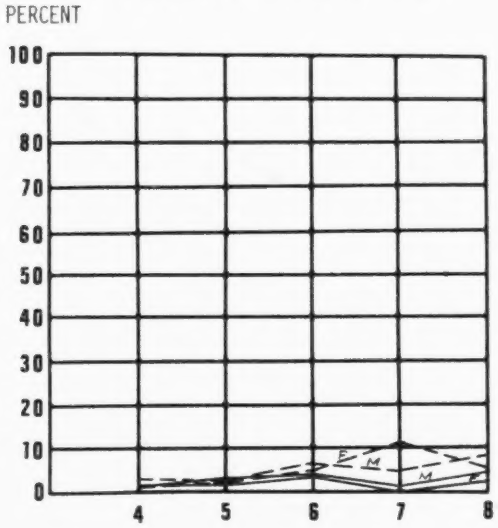


FIGURE 9

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE
OF THE PRESIDENT, BY SEX OF CHILD

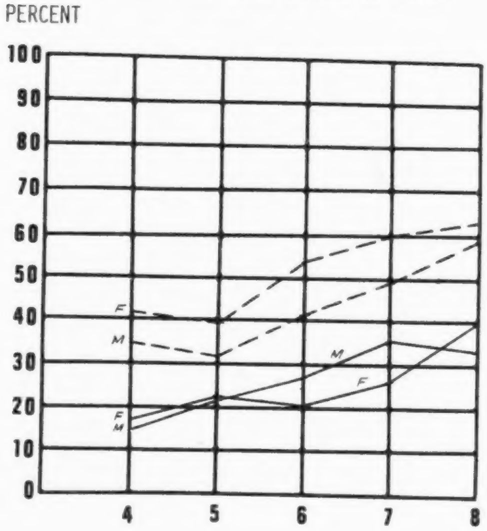


FIGURE 10

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE
OF THE GOVERNOR, BY SEX OF CHILD

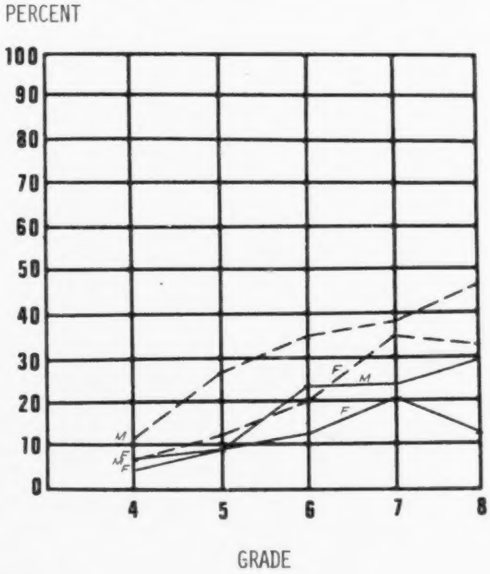


FIGURE 11

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE
OF THE MAYOR, BY SEX OF CHILD

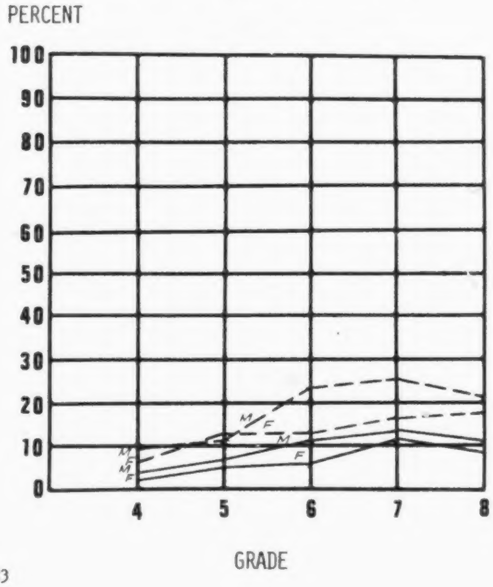


FIGURE 12

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS
OF CONGRESS, BY SEX OF CHILD

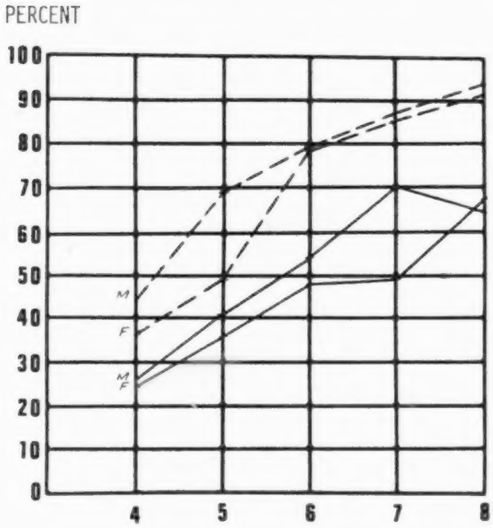


FIGURE 13

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF THE
STATE LEGISLATURE, BY SEX OF CHILD

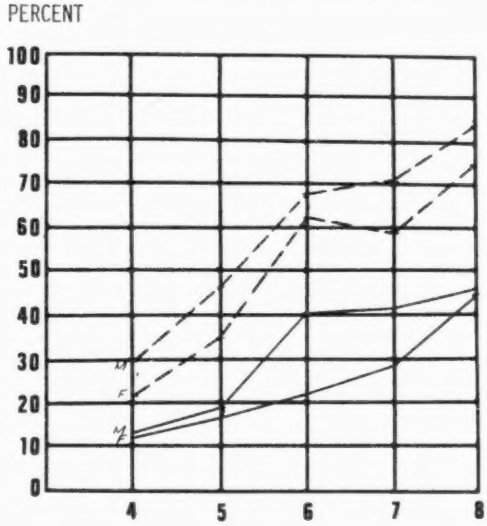


FIGURE 14

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF THE
LOCAL CITY COUNCIL, BY SEX OF CHILD

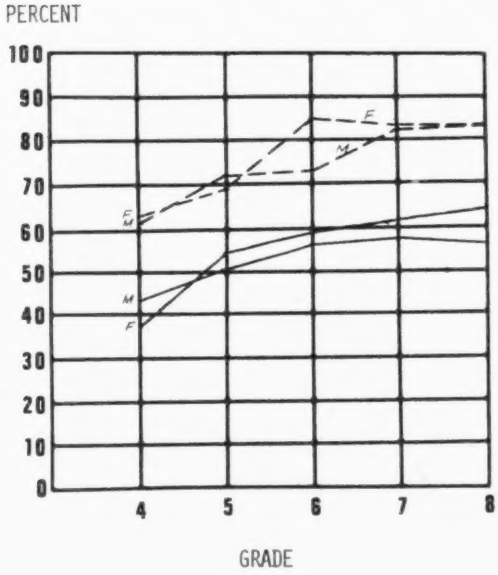
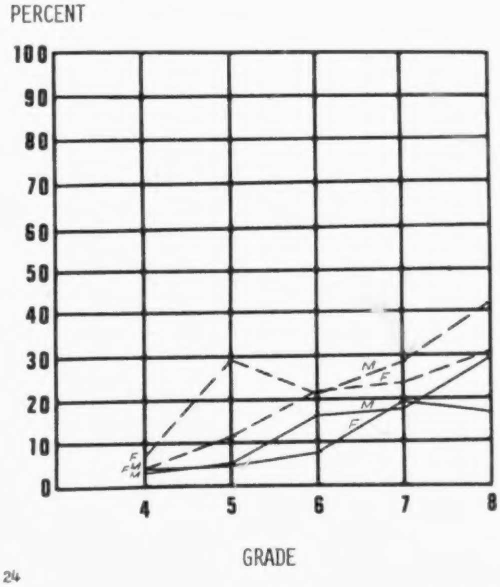


FIGURE 15

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME
OF CONGRESSMEN, BY SEX OF CHILD



responses by sex of child can be made reliably because of the few cases that are reported. However, children do seem to have greater knowledge about members of Congress, although the index of significant awareness is not approximated at any grade level. Figure 15 shows that fourth grade children of both sexes have very little knowledge of Congressmen, but as children proceed through the grades percentages increase. Although differences are small, both sexes of Anglo-Americans report knowledge of Congressmen with greater frequency than do Mexican-American children.

Understanding the role of Congress is related more to the child's ethnic background than to his sex. This information is depicted in Figure 16. Although few fourth grade children report this knowledge, there is a steady increase in the amount of information reported throughout the grades. Anglo-American children of both sexes are very much alike in their responses and so are the Mexican-Americans of both sexes, but the former report consistently higher frequencies. At no grade level, however, is the index of significant awareness achieved. Figures 17 and 18 show that, in general, knowledge about the role of the state legislature and the city council, respectively, is reported with less frequency than knowledge about the function of Congress; children of both sexes start at approximately the same low point in the fourth grade, but the Anglo-Americans of both sexes report higher frequencies as they progress through the grades than do the Mexican-Americans. While the frequencies that are reported are relatively small, differences appear to be associated more with ethnicity than with the sex of the child.

Section Summary

The differences between the two ethnic groups which are cited in the first section of this chapter persist when the data are analyzed further by sex of the child. Knowledge of the President is very high among all children, but the Mexican-American children of both sexes lag behind the Anglo-American. The pattern is repeated in naming the governor, but the frequencies are lower; initial similarities between the two ethnic groups are not maintained, and the curves of growth for each group become more divergent at the later grades. In explaining differences in knowledge about the roles of the President and the governor, ethnicity continues to be the dominant factor, since Anglo-Americans of both sexes consistently report greater amounts of information. Ethnic rather than sex differences are also apparent since Anglo-Americans seem to be more aware of institutions, describe their functions with greater frequency, and name Congressmen more often. However, among both ethnic groups, knowledge of the mayor, councilmen, and state legislators continues to be minimal.

Greenstein's survey of the literature and his own findings derived through the New Haven study indicate that boys are generally "more political" than girls.[9] He also reports average achievement scores in political information which are higher for the boys than for girls.[10] However, the present study indicates that although males generally report greater frequencies within each ethnic group, sometimes the differences are just minimal as in the case of understanding the role of Congress, and reversals also appear. Female Anglo-Americans report knowledge about the President with greater frequency than do the males, and the Mexican-American girls also surpass the boys in all but two of the grades. Females of both ethnic groups surpass the males in awareness of the city council, although differences are small.

Because Greenstein's data are concerned with averages derived from the combination of responses to a variety of questions, the results are likely to be more stable for clusters of items than are those which are reported above. However, one disadvantage of averages is their tendency to hide information. Since information about the roles of the President and Congress is likely to be derived through instruction in school as well as from other sources, it is possible that even if sex differences in political interest and participation do occur, there may be no cognitive differences between boys and girls in selected items of political information. Indeed, females may even have greater knowledge than males about aspects of the political process that are directly related to instruction in school. Further research along these lines might be fruitful.

Social Status Differences in Political Information

The results presented in the two preceding sections show consistent differences between children of the two ethnic groups in amount of information about political leaders, knowledge of their roles, and awareness of the functions of the several levels of government. In this section analyses will be made to detect the effect of social status on the amount of political information that is reported. For example, if differences between ethnic groups in their frequency of response to certain items tend to disappear when the data are classified by social status, and if differences between social classes are then identified, one can assume that the behavior tends to be related more to variability among the several social classes than to factors associated with ethnicity. However, if the differences between ethnic groups in their frequency of response tend to persist, one can hypothesize that factors associated with ethnicity rather than social status explain the differences in behavior.

In other words, if differences between ethnic groups are no longer present when data are further classified by social status, but variability is observed between social classes, one could expect both Anglo-American and Mexican-American children of lower social status to be very much alike in the frequency with which

FIGURE 16

CHILDREN REPORTING THE FUNCTION OF CONGRESS, BY SEX OF CHILD

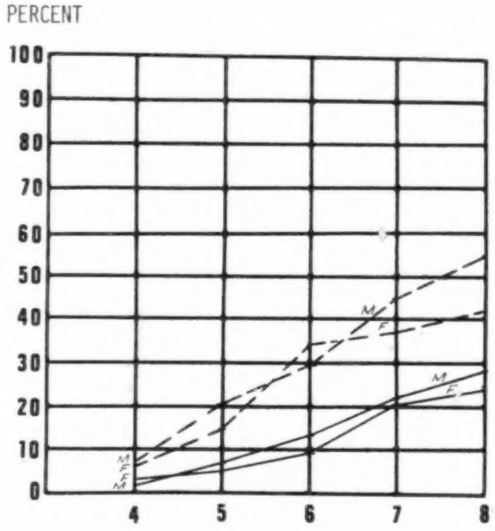


FIGURE 17

CHILDREN REPORTING THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE, BY SEX OF CHILD

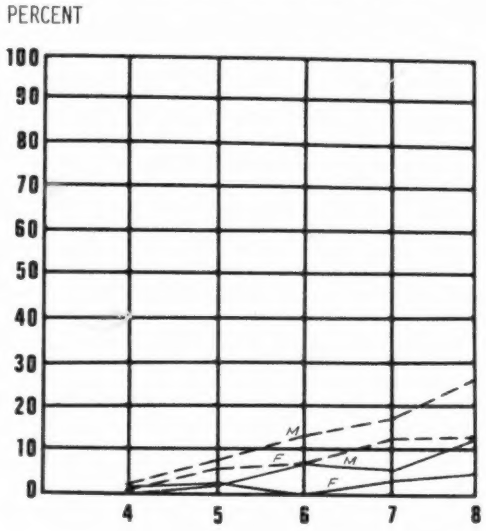


FIGURE 18

CHILDREN REPORTING THE FUNCTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL, BY SEX OF CHILD

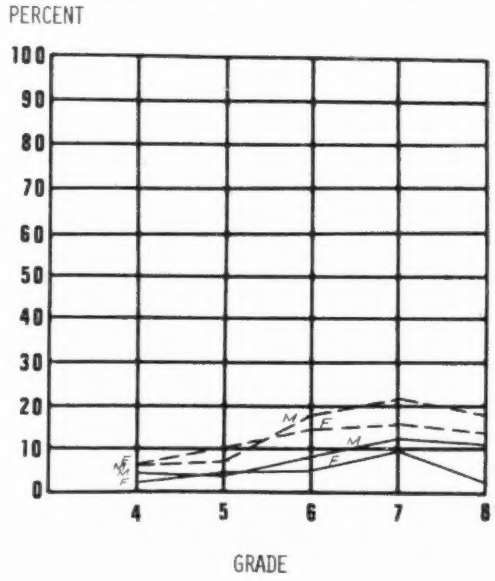


FIGURE 19

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF THE PRESIDENT, BY SOCIAL STATUS

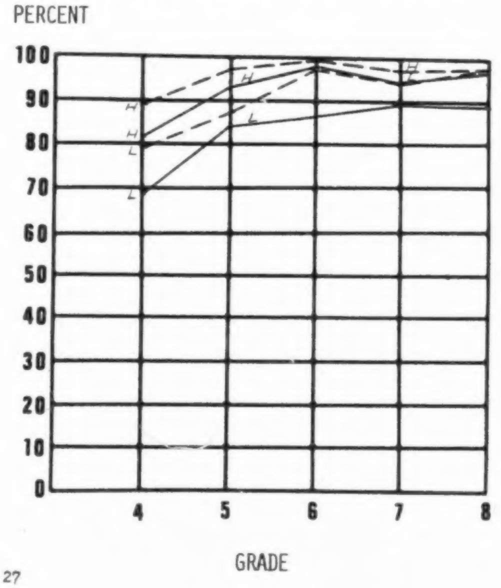


FIGURE 20

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME
OF THE GOVERNOR, BY SOCIAL STATUS

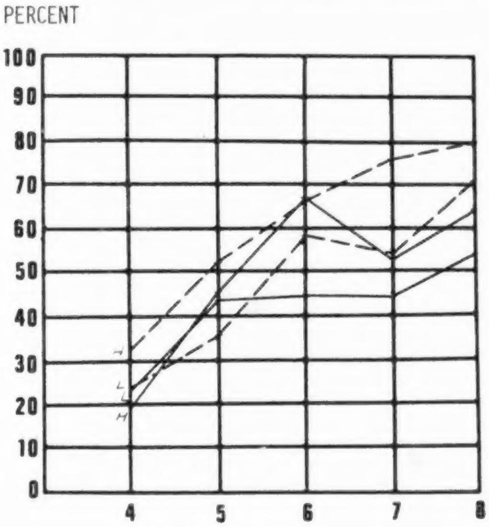


FIGURE 21

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME
OF THE MAYOR, BY SOCIAL STATUS

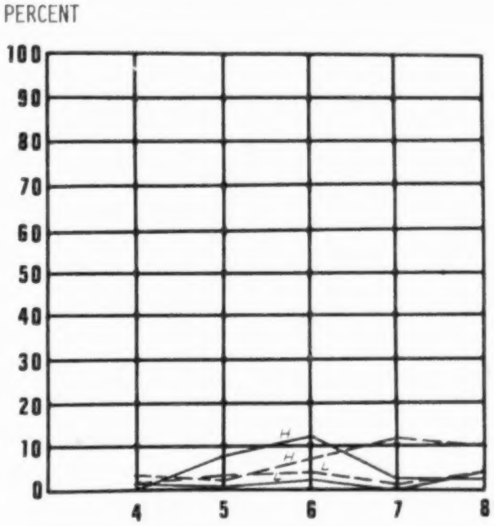


FIGURE 22

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE
OF THE PRESIDENT, BY SOCIAL STATUS

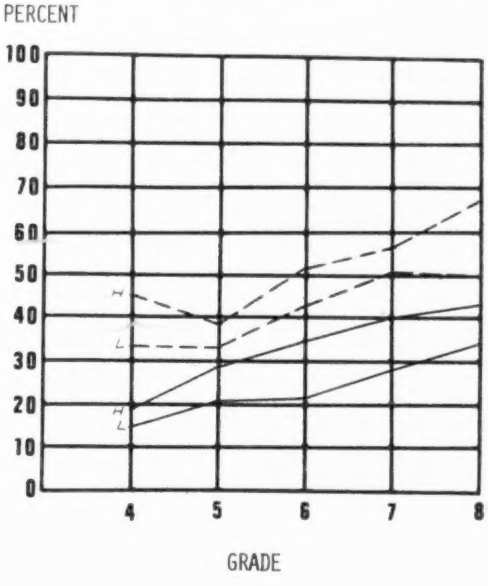
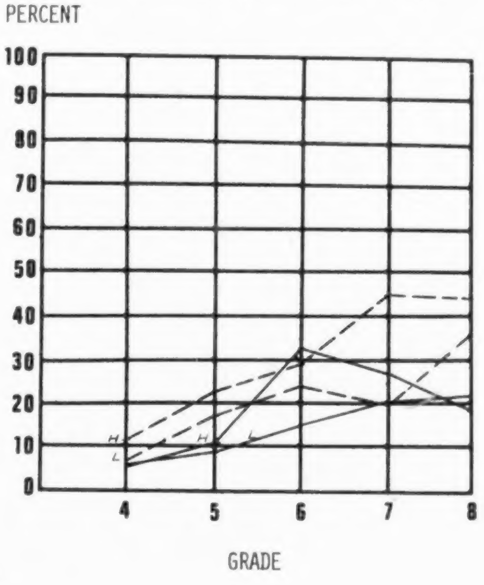


FIGURE 23

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE
OF THE GOVERNOR, BY SOCIAL STATUS



they report responses to certain items and the upper class Anglo-Americans and Mexican-Americans to report responses with similar frequency also. On the other hand, if the differences between the two ethnic groups persist when children of similar social status are compared, one might expect to find that the responses of the Anglo-Americans of both social classes tend to be similar, but also different from the responses of the two status groups of Mexican-Americans which might also tend to be alike.

Figures 19, 20, and 21 show the percent of children by grade, subculture, and social status who are able to state the name of the President, the governor, and the mayor of their respective communities. Awareness of the President is high among both of the social status groups, and differences between them are insignificant. Only the Mexican-Americans of lower social status seem to lag slightly behind, but by the seventh grade approximately 90% of them can name the President. In direct contrast, very few children can name their local mayor, and differences among status groups are so small that the reliability of the percentages is uncertain. However, although differences in awareness of the governor are at first insignificant, by eighth grade a clear pattern of response emerges: the Anglo-Americans of upper status report the greatest frequencies, Mexican-Americans of lower status report the lowest, and the remaining two groups are in between. Initial similarities disappear as children proceed through the grades.

Figures 22, 23, and 24 show, respectively, the percent of children who report understanding of the roles of President, governor, and mayor.[11] Differences in information about the President's functions are clearly related to ethnic background, but there are also social status differences within each group. Anglo-Americans of both status groups report information with greater frequency than do the Mexican-Americans. The curves of growth are positioned in the following order: Anglo-Americans, upper status first, lower status second; Mexican-Americans, upper status third, lower status fourth. The greatest disparity may be observed at the eighth grade between upper status Anglo-American children and lower status Mexican-American.

Figures 25, 26, and 27 show, respectively, the percent of children who report awareness of Congress, the state legislature, and the local city council classified by grade, ethnic group membership, and social status. In general, differences between children of the two ethnic groups which may be observed throughout the three graphs suggest clearly that factors associated with their ethnic background might explain variations. But within each ethnic group social status differences may also be found. The data depicted in each graph show that Anglo-Americans of upper and lower status report awareness with higher frequency, generally, than do Mexican-Americans, and upper status Mexican-Americans report frequencies which are closer in magnitude to those of the lower rather than the upper status Anglo-Americans. Except at isolated points in the graphs, the growth curves for the ethnic and status groups appear in the following order: in first and second place are curves for the upper and lower status Anglo-Americans, respectively, and in third and fourth position are the curves representing, respectively, the upper and lower status Mexican-Americans.

Awareness of the city council appears earliest; each of the ethnic and status groups achieve the level of significant awareness by the fifth grade, and all but lower status Mexican-Americans surpass this level at the fourth grade. Awareness of Congress appears later; the index of significant awareness is surpassed at the fifth grade by both upper and lower status Anglo-Americans, but the level of significant awareness is surpassed by the Mexican-Americans of upper and lower status, respectively, in grades six and seven. Awareness of the state legislature appears latest. Upper and lower status Anglo-Americans achieve the index at the fifth and sixth grades, respectively. The Mexican-Americans of upper status surpass the 50% level in the seventh grade only, while the lower status children do not surpass it at any grade.

There are no social class differences in knowledge of the names of state legislators or city councilmen, and in fact few children can name members; therefore, no graphs are presented for these groups. However, there do appear to be social class differences associated with knowledge of the names of Congressmen (Figure 28). Although the names of Congressmen are virtually unknown to children at grade four, a large increment in percentage occurs at the fifth grade for Anglo-Americans of upper status. Ethnic group differences begin to disappear and class differences emerge at grades six and seven. But at grade eight the Anglo-Americans of lower status overtake the upper class children. The curve of growth for the Mexican-American children of lower social status rises slowly at successive grade levels. It appears likely that increased attention to current events in the upper grades enables the Mexican-American children of upper status to approximate the achievement of upper class Anglo-American children. Although differences are slight, at the seventh grade the Mexican-Americans even surpass the Anglo-Americans of similar social status.

The ability to report reasonably accurate information about the function of Congress appears to be associated with both ethnicity and social status. In general, Figure 29 shows that Anglo-Americans of both social classes report information with higher frequency than do upper and lower status Mexican-Americans. At the fourth grade level few children can report the function of Congress. Thereafter, the curves of growth for both of the ethnic and status groups rise almost steadily, and in general they are positioned in the following order: Anglo-American upper and lower status, Mexican-American upper and

FIGURE 24

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF THE MAYOR, BY SOCIAL STATUS

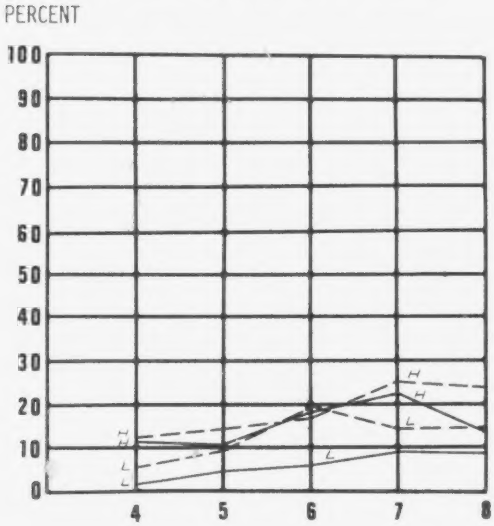


FIGURE 25

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF CONGRESS, BY SOCIAL STATUS

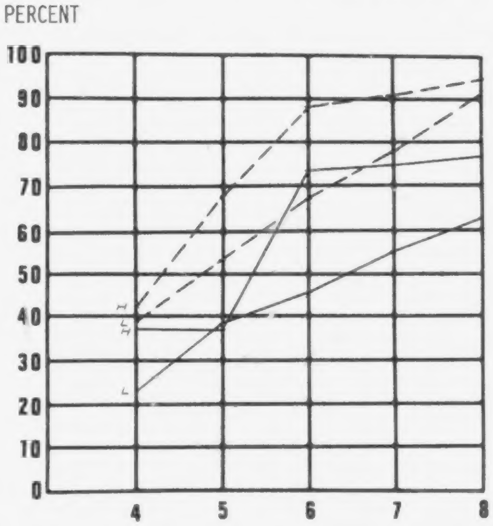


FIGURE 26

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE, BY SOCIAL STATUS

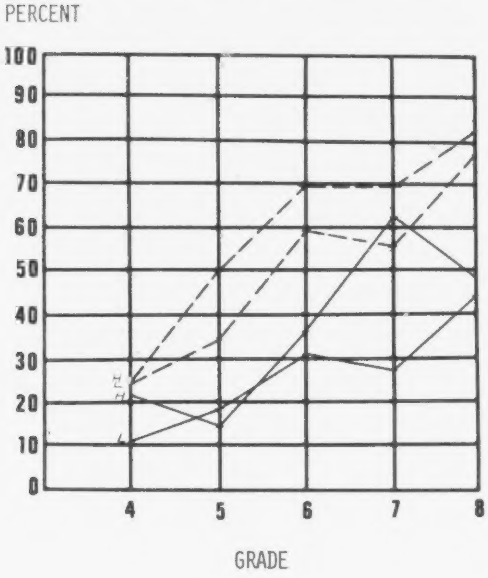


FIGURE 27

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF THE LOCAL CITY COUNCIL, BY SOCIAL STATUS

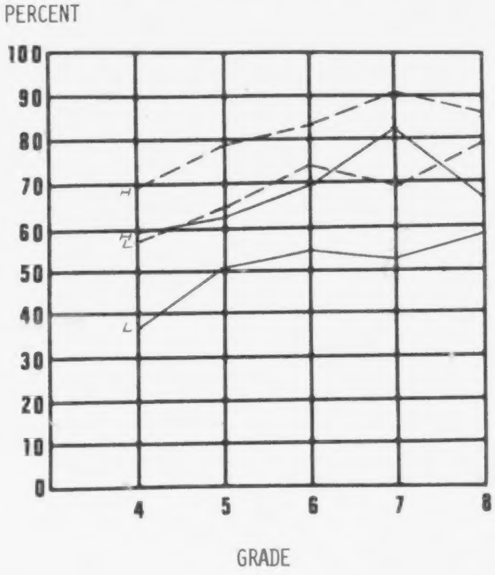


FIGURE 28

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF CONGRESSMEN, BY SOCIAL STATUS

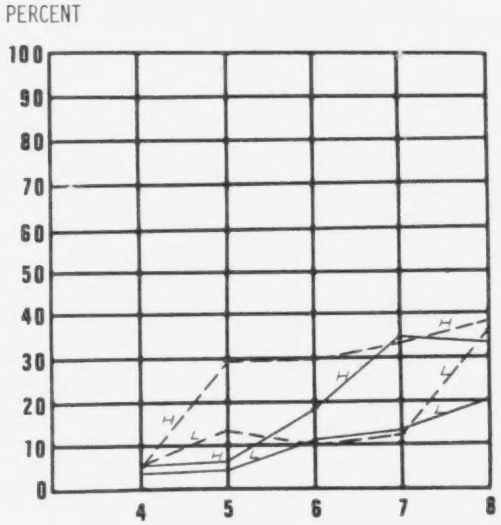


FIGURE 29

CHILDREN REPORTING THE FUNCTION OF CONGRESS, BY SOCIAL STATUS

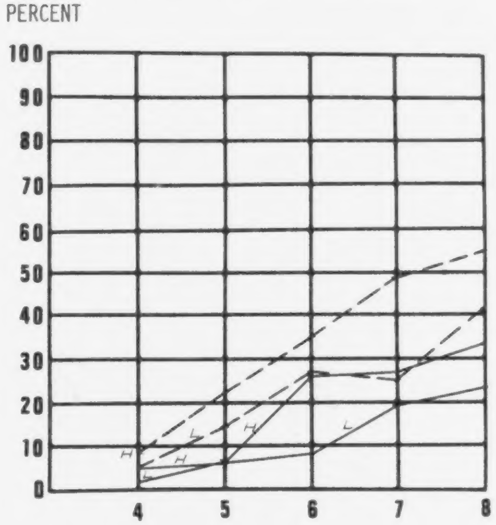


FIGURE 30

CHILDREN REPORTING THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE, BY SOCIAL STATUS

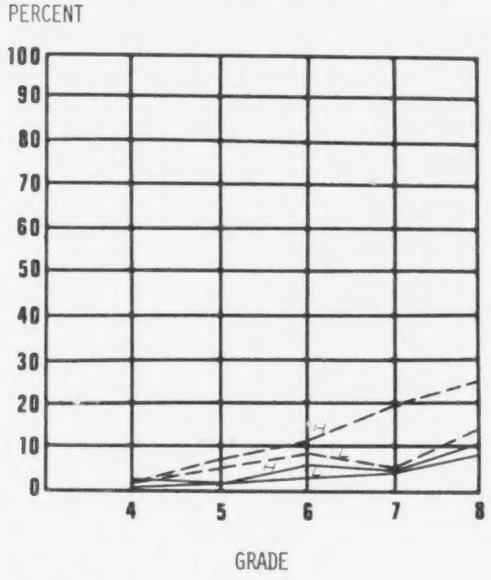
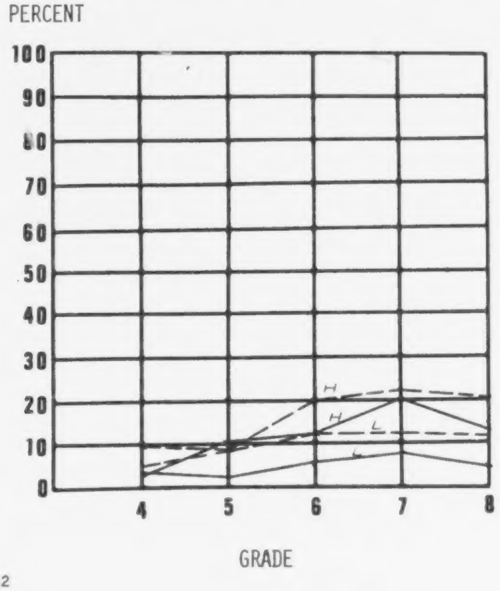


FIGURE 31

CHILDREN REPORTING THE FUNCTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL, BY SOCIAL STATUS



lower status. It is strikingly apparent that the growth curves of the upper class Mexican-Americans and lower status Anglo-Americans are very much alike.

Figure 30 depicts the frequency with which children report information about the function of the state legislature. While differences are very small, they appear to be related to factors associated with both ethnicity and social class. In Figure 31, potential class differences in reports of the function of the city council can be observed, but unfortunately because percentages are so very small the results are inconclusive.

Section Summary

When Greenstein analyzed children's knowledge of information about formal governmental institutions by social status, no consistent class differences emerged in favor of one group or the other.[12] He attributed the similarities between the two status groups to specific instruction about government which children receive in school. Easton and Hess, on the other hand, did find small but consistent differences favoring upper over lower status children in their degree of certainty about what government means.[13] The findings of the present investigation support those of Easton and Hess, but they do not necessarily refute Greenstein's results. It is possible that curricula within the schools sampled in southern California do not emphasize government; hence the family and other agencies of socialization might exert the principal influence on the political learning of Anglo-American children of upper social status. The fact that the responses of Anglo-Americans of lower status and Mexican-Americans of upper status are often quite similar might be accounted for by lack of political interest within families of the latter ethnic group. The Anglo-American family of lower social status might be as politically involved as the upper status Mexican-American family--perhaps even more active.

A clear picture of the combined influence of ethnic group membership and social status may be observed by comparing the responses of Anglo-Americans of upper social status and Mexican-Americans of lower status. The gap between the two groups in the frequency with which they report information about the President's role is very wide, and it remains relatively constant throughout the grades. Although differences between the two groups in the frequency with which they report information about the governor and mayor are generally smaller in comparison with the knowledge which they report about the President, the disparity becomes greater in the higher grades. The children are more alike in their awareness of Congress and the state legislature in the fourth grade than they are later in the eighth grade. The difference between the two groups in their awareness of the city council remains at about the same high level throughout the grades, and very similar patterns are evident with respect to awareness of Congressmen and knowledge of the functions of the three levels of government. Hence, at best the initial disparities between the two groups continue through the upper grades; at worst the gap widens as the children get older.

What do these growth patterns portend for the future? Most of the upper class Anglo-Americans are likely to complete high school where they will take a formal course in government, and a large proportion of them will go on to acquire higher education. On the other hand, the percentage of Mexican-American youth of lower social status who will drop out of high school is very high. Therefore one might anticipate that because of the disparity between the two groups in their fund of political information, they will bring to the political process varying perceptions and interpretations of their roles. Even if he were not discriminated against because of his ethnic background, the Mexican-American who is of lower social status appears destined to remain at a political disadvantage.

Level of Ability and Difference in Political Information

Further analyses of the political information of children will be made in this final section of Chapter II. Probably the best way to find out if the two ethnic groups vary with respect to cognitive aspects of the participant political culture is to classify the children by level of academic performance and then compare the responses of equivalent ability groups. At least for the high-performing students, the degree of success which they have already achieved in school can be accepted as an indication of their general learning ability not only within the school but outside of the academic environment as well.

Some children who perform well academically probably have already benefited from special advantages associated with their family's social status and their own native ability. On the other hand, those children who achieve success in school but whose social status background conferred no academic advantage and, indeed, might even have retarded their chances of success, have already demonstrated that their handicaps are largely overcome. Therefore, one should expect differences between the responses of the two ethnic groups to disappear if the cognitive aspects of political orientations tend to be related more to academic ability than to ethnicity and to persist, on the other hand, if the ethnic component is a dominent factor.

Figures 32, 33 and 34 show the percentages of children by grade, academic performance, and ethnic background who are able to state the name of the President, the governor, and the mayor of their respective communities. As might be expected, the differences between ability groups in knowledge of the President's name appear to be greatest in the fourth grade. Within the high, the average, and the low ability categories the frequencies are

FIGURE 32

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF THE PRESIDENT, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

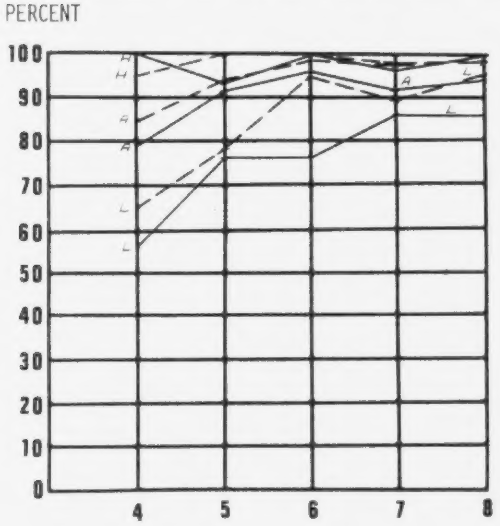


FIGURE 33

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

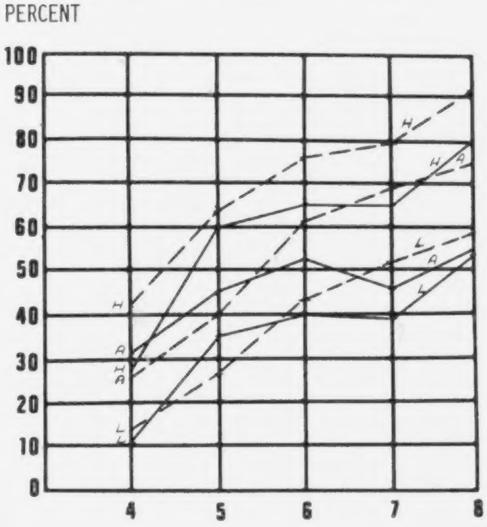


FIGURE 34

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF THE MAYOR, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

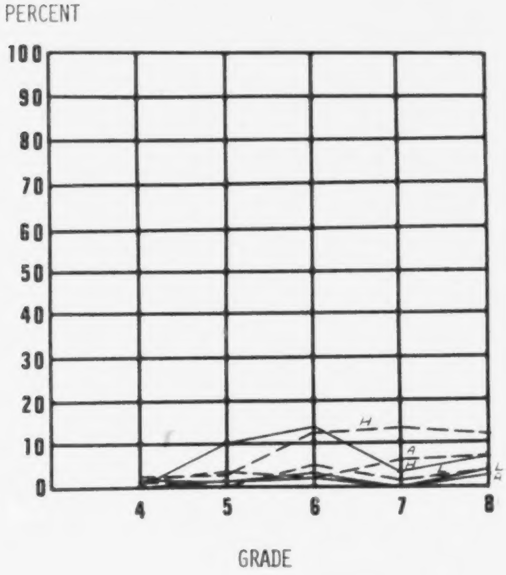


FIGURE 35

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

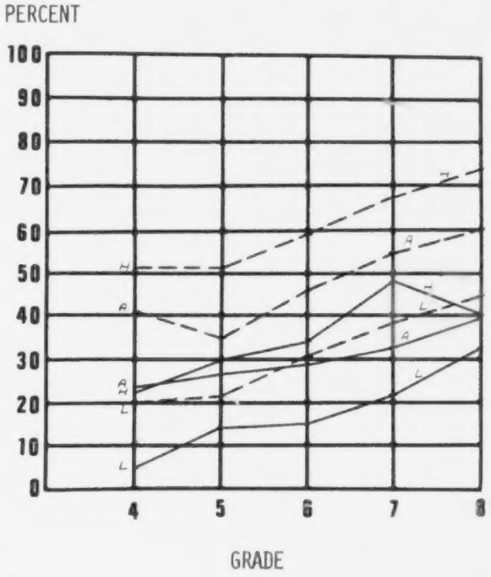


FIGURE 36

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

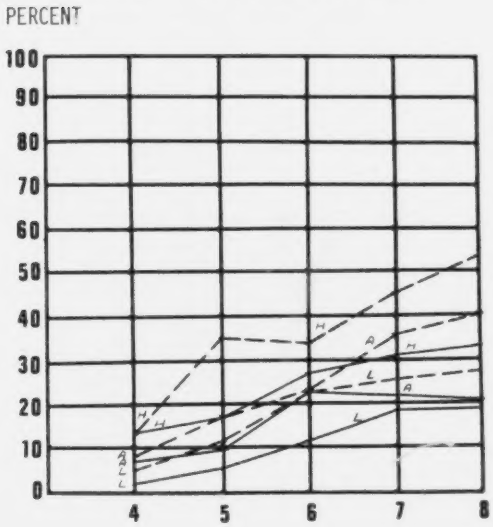


FIGURE 37

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF THE MAYOR, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

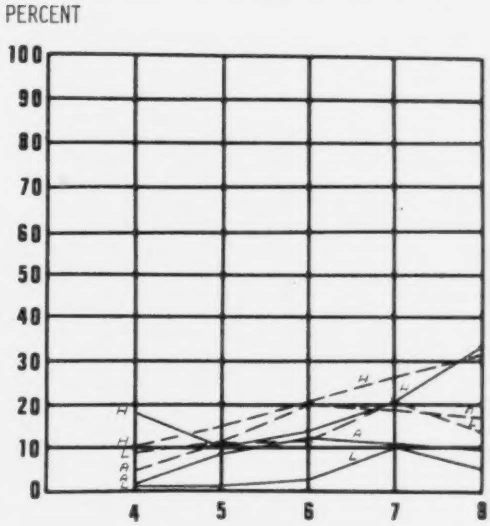


FIGURE 38

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF CONGRESS, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

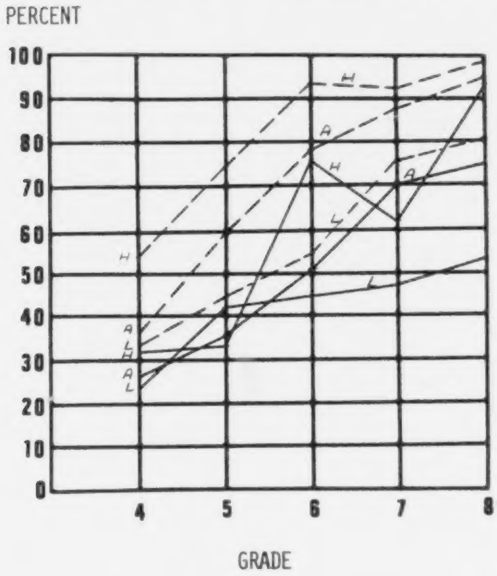
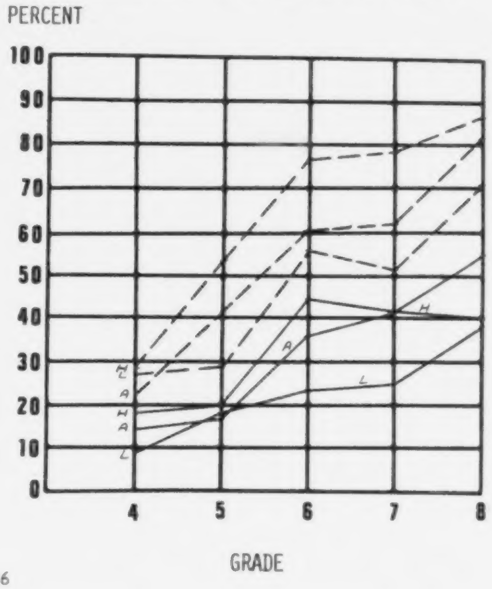


FIGURE 39

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



very much alike for each ethnic group; the curves of growth start narrowing at the fifth grade and differences almost disappear by the eighth. Only the Mexican-American children of low academic performance fail to respond beyond the 87% frequency of response by the eighth grade, but this level is relatively high.[14] In contrast, no differences between the ability groups in naming the mayor can be reported reliably because of the low frequency of response to this question.

On the other hand, the governor is fairly well known. In grades four, five and six the frequencies reported by the two ethnic groups are very similar at each level of academic performance, and within levels the only consistent superiority is observed among the Anglo-Americans of high ability who maintain the lead at all grades. In grades seven and eight, the Mexican-Americans of high ability and Anglo-Americans of average ability are very much alike, while the curves for Mexican-Americans of average and low academic performance occupy the lowest positions.

Understanding of the roles of President, governor and mayor is depicted in Figures 35, 36 and 37. The Anglo-Americans of high and average academic performance report knowledge of the President's functions with greater frequency than do the Mexican-Americans of both ability categories. Within the latter ethnic group, children of low academic performance lag behind in each of the grades. The children of high ability within each ethnic group report knowledge about the governor's functions with almost equal frequency in the fourth grade, but thereafter the Anglo-Americans take the lead and the disparity between the frequencies reported by the two groups become greater at the upper two grades. The Anglo-Americans of average academic performance surpass the Mexican-Americans of high ability in the seventh and eighth grades. The Mexican-Americans of average and low ability lag behind the Anglo-Americans of low academic performance in the last two grades. In describing the mayor's role the frequencies of response are generally very low, but the Mexican-Americans of high ability report frequencies in the fourth grade that are higher than those of the Anglo-Americans. The percentages are lower than those reported by the Anglo-Americans of high ability in the middle three grades but are slightly higher in the eighth. The Mexican-Americans of average and low academic performance report the lowest frequencies throughout the grades.

In general, the Anglo-Americans show greater awareness of such institutions of government as the Congress of the United States, the California State Legislature, and the local city council than do the Mexican-Americans. This information is depicted in Figures 38, 39 and 40. Starting in the early grades, children show relatively high awareness of the city council. At the fifth grade all groups but Mexican-Americans of low academic performance attain the index of significant awareness. The Anglo-Americans of high and average academic performance report greater awareness than do the Mexican-Americans of similar ability and within the latter ethnic group children of low ability lag behind. Although children do not seem to become aware of Congress as early as they become aware of the city council, by the sixth grade all but the Mexican-Americans of low ability surpass the 50% index. The Anglo-Americans of high and average academic performance report greater awareness than do both ability categories of Mexican-Americans; but while the Mexican-American children of high ability almost overtake the Anglo-Americans at grade eight, for those of low ability the differences become greater.

The pattern of dissimilarity between the two ethnic groups is repeated when awareness of the state legislature is examined; differences between children of relatively similar ability are shown very clearly. In general, even the Anglo-Americans of low academic performance lead all three Mexican-American ability groups. The question which suggests itself at this point in the discussion is whether or not the Mexican-American children in general are more reluctant than their Anglo-American counterparts to make assertions about which they are not completely sure. The tenability of this hypothesis will be discussed in the section summary after presentation of the next series of growth curves.

Figures 41 and 42 show, respectively, the frequency with which children report knowledge of the names of Congressmen and city councilmen. The state legislators are virtually unknown; therefore, percentages may not be reported reliably. While this is true for city councilmen also, the graph which shows that the Mexican-Americans of high academic performance make a dramatic upsurge in grade eight is of special interest. Although all groups report rather similar frequencies in grade four, knowledge of Congressmen is reported with the highest frequency by Anglo-Americans of high academic performance. The Mexican-Americans of high and average ability do not vary much from the Anglo-Americans of average ability until after the seventh grade.

At all grades, the most able of the Anglo-American children report information about the roles of Congress and city council more frequently than do the Mexican-American children of similar ability (Figures 43, 45). They also report information about the state legislature more frequently at the junior high school grades (Figure 44). However, in grades six, seven and eight the Mexican-Americans of high academic performance report information about the role of Congress with greater frequency than do the Anglo-Americans of average and low ability. But the Anglo-Americans of average and low academic performance lead their Mexican-American counterparts.

Section Summary

In this section of Chapter II the political knowledge of children of both ethnic groups was compared after the respondents

FIGURE 40

CHILDREN REPORTING AWARENESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

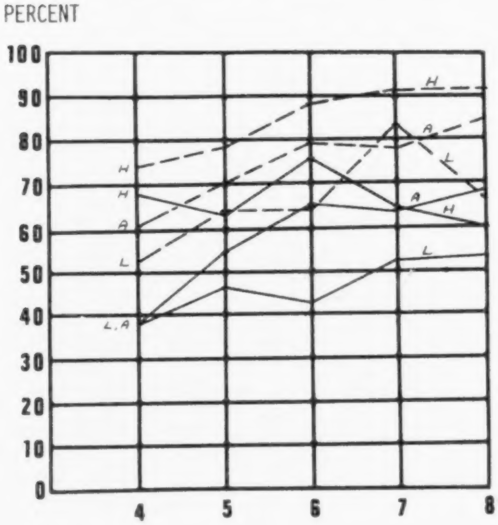


FIGURE 41

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF CONGRESSMEN, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

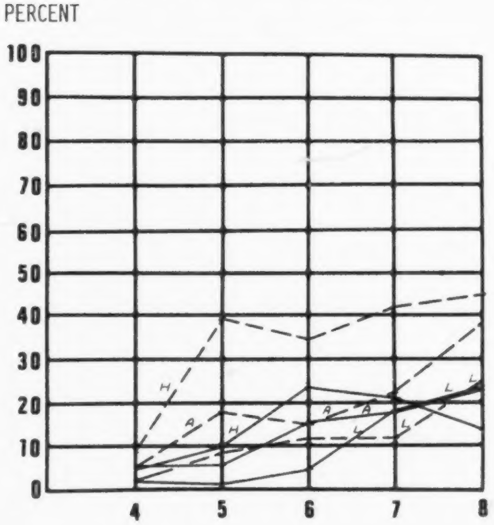


FIGURE 42

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAME OF CITY COUNCILMEN, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

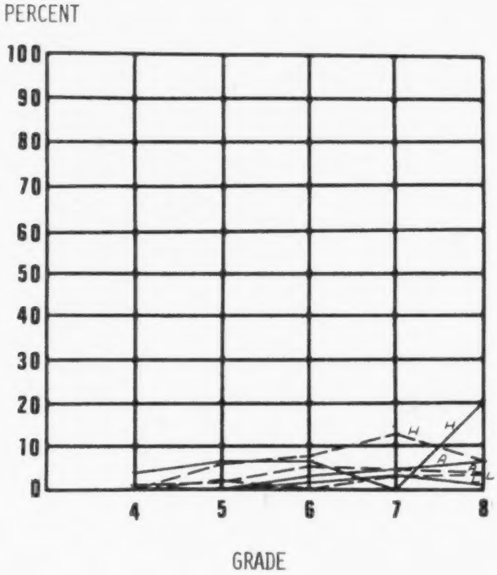


FIGURE 43

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF CONGRESS, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

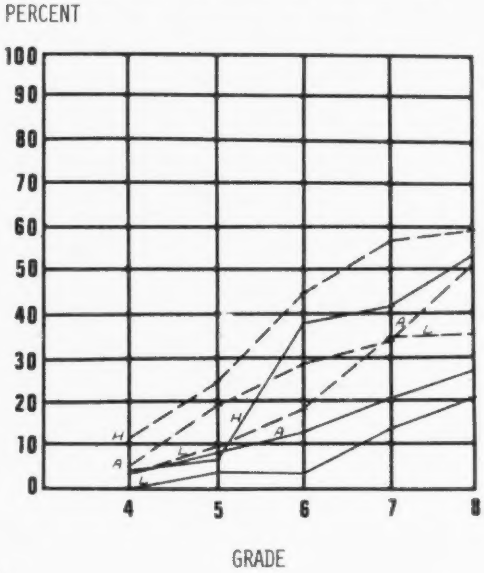


FIGURE 44

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF THE
STATE LEGISLATURE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

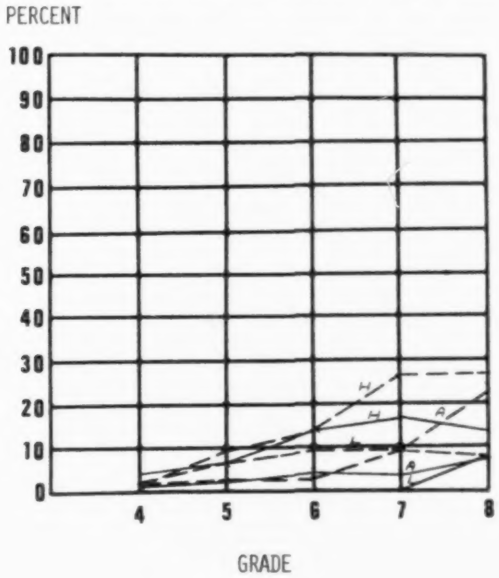
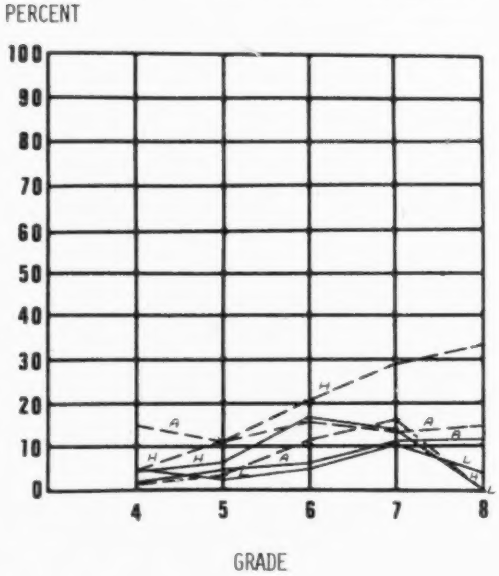


FIGURE 45

CHILDREN REPORTING THE ROLE OF THE
CITY COUNCIL, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



were classified according to categories of high, average and low academic performance. The information which is presented in the preceding pages indicates beyond any doubt that within each of the ability categories where the children of each ethnic group are assumed to be academically equivalent, the Anglo-Americans report with greater frequency knowledge of political executives at the national, state and local levels. However, very few children from each group report information about the mayor and his functions.

The Mexican-American children also report less frequently than do the Anglo-American information about the roles of legislators and the functions of such legislative bodies as the Congress, the state legislature, and the city council. In each case, differences between children of the two ethnic groups are relatively small in the lower grades but the disparity between the Anglo-Americans of high ability and the Mexican-Americans of average and low ability increases considerably by grade eight. For all ability groups, knowledge about the state legislature and city council is minimal, although the Anglo-Americans of high ability report the largest percentages.

It was reported previously that awareness of the existence of the city council, Congress, and the state legislature is relatively high for all children, and it is particularly so for Anglo-Americans of the three ability groups. However, except for children of high academic performance, superiority is not maintained by the Anglo-Americans when they are subsequently asked to give specific information about the names and functions of executives and legislators. There are several plausible explanations for the decline in percentage of response from the former to the latter items. Perhaps it is just the simplicity of the first task which accounts for the relatively high frequencies which are reported. Producing a written response, on the other hand, is more difficult than checking an alternative on a questionnaire, since it requires the respondent to write information which he must actually possess. It is also possible that the Anglo-Americans are more "test wise" and sensitive to the greater desirability of the 'yes' responses; therefore, they are more ready to indicate awareness of these institutions although they have very little information upon which to base their choice. Differences between the two ethnic groups in their test sophistication and response set might prove to be a profitable avenue for further research in the measurement of cognitive ability.

Notes

1. Dawson and Prewitt, op. cit., pp. 52-61 ff.

2. Some of the questions are modifications of those employed by Fred Greenstein, op cit., Appendix A.

3. The index of significant awareness is a useful reference term for describing data, but it does not imply statistical significance. Tests of statistical significance cannot be applied legitimately in this study because of the nonrandom sampling procedures employed in selecting subjects. The reader is referred to the sections on methodology for more information about the research design.

4. The data presented in this and succeeding sections may be accepted as indicators of crude norms of development at the several grade levels since they describe the status of children's knowledge, at least as it appeared at the time the questionnaire was administered. However, they are not to be interpreted as standards for achievement. Although percentages are given for children at succeeding grade levels, the reader should be aware that this is not longitudinal research. Since the same children are not being followed through the grades, it is basically a cross-sectional study.

5. For summaries of research on sex differences, see Greenstein (1965) and Hess and Torney (1967).

6. Frederick Elkin, The Child and Society, (New York: Random House, 1960), pp. 46-56 ff.

7. Dawson and Prewitt, op. cit., Chapter VII.

8. Factors associated with ethnic background could include a variety of environmental influences such as education of parents, nativity, language spoken in the home, English language facility, political participation of parents, memberships in clubs and organizations, etc.

9. Greenstein, op. cit., p. 115.

10. Ibid., p. 117.

11. Because of the mixed character of the curves depicting knowledge about the roles of the governor and the mayor, there is little that can be said about ethnic and social class differences except that the gap between upper class Anglo-Americans and lower status Mexican-Americans appears to widen as children progress through the grades.

12. Greenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

13. Easton and Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

14. For a national sample of 13 year old children, 94% could name President Nixon. See *National Assessment of Educational Progress*, Report 2: Citizenship, U.S. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C., November 1970, p. 54.

Chapter III

ANALYSIS OF FEELINGS TOWARD THE STRUCTURE OF AUTHORITY

Introduction

The political system of the United States has been characterized by considerable stability since the Civil War, even through difficult periods of economic depression and wars, both hot and cold. Social scientists who attribute this stability to the high degree of system support which prevails, have investigated its sources. David Easton and his associates focused their research principally on processes of socialization during childhood which promote orientations toward the structure of authority.

> We assume that the attitudes toward political authority that are learned early will have some impact on the ability of any political system to operate in a society and upon the future stability or change of the particular political system in which the socialization occurs.[1]

As a result of their investigation, they conclude that at an early age children in America exhibit favorable attitudes toward government, political leaders, the regime and the compliance system.

In analyzing the effects of social class on the attitudes of children, Fred Greenstein also found that children exhibit positive attitudes toward leaders, but lower class children tend to rate political leaders more favorably than do higher status children.[2] Hess and Torney observed that children of lower status show a greater degree of emotional attachment to the President, but there are insignificant differences between social classes in patriotic sentiment, feelings that government figures are benign, and acceptance of law and authority.[3] However, Easton and Dennis had little success in establishing clearly defined relationships between social status and idealization of the President.[4]

Fred Greenstein's survey was conducted in 1958, and the investigations of Hess and Easton were based upon data gathered during the early part of the decade of the 1960s. Although their studies do not reveal social class differences in support for the structure of authority, one may currently find numerous reports in the mass media which indicate that blacks, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans and Indians are dissatisfied with the system of authority and the share of its benefits which they receive. Therefore, a question might be raised about the studies that have been cited: Are they relevant only in the context of the time period during which they were undertaken? Are the populations that were sampled so selective and homogeneous that they reflect the attitude of only the complacent dominant culture? With respect to the latter question, perhaps other studies of unique subgroups might provide additional information about children's attitudes toward government and prominent political leaders.

In a study of the political orientations of children in a rural poverty area of the Appalachian region of the United States, Dean Jaros observed that dispositions toward political objects, including the President, were considerably less favorable than those of the children sampled in the research reported previously.

> Moreover, the image which these children have does not appear to develop with age in the fashion observed for others; there is no indication that a process conducive to the development of political support is operative in Appalachia. Here, children's views appear to be relatively static.[5]

The conclusion which might be drawn from his investigation is that research results which characterize children's orientation toward political objects as highly positive may be applicable only to the dominant culture.

This chapter is concerned with analyses of the feelings expressed by Anglo-American and Mexican-American children toward the structure of authority: government in general, incumbent leaders, and the compliance system. It seeks to discern differences between the two ethnic groups in their evaluation of components of the authority system and whether or not the expectations of each group vary with regard to the responsiveness of authority to their needs. Although this chapter is concerned principally with the affective elements of political orientations while Chapter II is devoted primarily to the cognitive, the analyses will follow the same general sequence of exposition. First, the responses of the two ethnic groups will be compared, and then within each section there will follow more intensive examinations of the data by socioeconomic status, sex of the child, and academic performance.

Feelings Toward Government and Leaders

One approach to studying affective orientations toward the authority system is to assess children's feelings about the sensitivity of government to the problems of individuals, and afterwards observe whether or not the expectations of each ethnic group vary with regard to the responsiveness of authorities. Government responsiveness was tapped by asking children to indicate the extent to which they believe the President, governor and mayor would help with their problems. In addition, two questions probed feelings about whether or not government in general cares about the troubles of people and their opinions. Children checked responses to the questionnaire items along a five point scale.[6]

The responsiveness of government to the problems of individuals and what they think is presented in Figures 46 and 47, respectively. These graphs depict the combined positive response, "It cares very much" or "...a lot." Differences between the two ethnic groups in expectations of government responsiveness are quite small in the early grades, but the higher percentages which are reported by Anglo-Americans indicate that they have greater confidence in its sensitivity to their problems. The declining percentages which are reported by the Mexican-American children indicate that cynicism increases steadily throughout the grades; differences between the two ethnic groups are greatest at grade eight. The Mexican-Americans are also less confident in government responsiveness to what people think, but the percentage decline levels off in grades seven and eight. At the same time, however, the Anglo-Americans are developing greater confidence in their political efficacy.

The "I don't know" category of response to items on the questionnaire can be used as a measure of attitude acquisition, positive or negative; the greater the magnitude of the percentages that are found in this category, the less is the extent of attitude development. Conversely, the smaller the size of the percentage that is reported, the higher is the degree of acquired attitude. Figure 48 shows the percentages that were checked by the two ethnic groups for the "I don't know" category. The fact that at all grades, more Mexican-American than Anglo-American children check this alternative, suggests that fewer of them acquire attitudes, positive or negative. The pattern is repeated in Figure 49 which shows the frequency of the "I don't know" responses to the question concerning whether or not the government cares about what people think. However, the general decline in percentages indicates that children of each ethnic group are increasing in attitude development at successively higher grade levels.

The percentages reported in Figures 50, 51, and 52, respectively, suggest that young children of each ethnic group start out with high expectations that the President, governor, and mayor are responsive to their troubles, but this confidence declines steadily throughout the grades. However, the rate of percentage decline for the mayor is less sharp than for the more distant political leaders. The percentages of "don't know" responses remain consistently high throughout the grades for both groups and they fluctuate only within a narrow range (Figures 53, 54, 55). The absence of slope to these curves at successive grade levels indicates that for a large proportion of children, the degree of uncertainty about the responsiveness of leaders appears to be affected and changed very little by the several agencies of socialization.

FIGURE 46

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES
OF PEOPLE "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT"

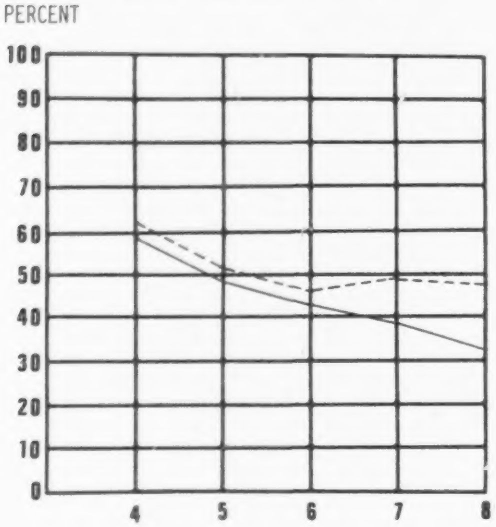


FIGURE 47

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT
WHAT PEOPLE THINK "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT"

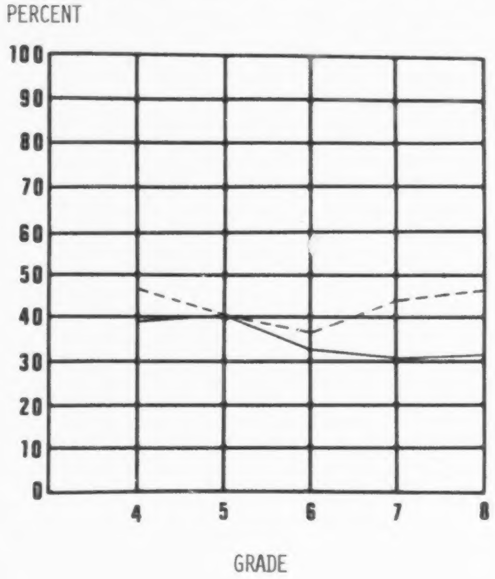
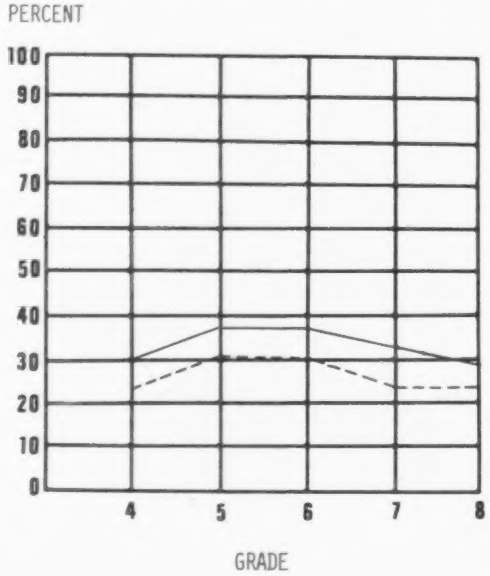


FIGURE 48

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT
CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE



KEY TO FIGURES

——— MEXICAN-AMERICAN
- - - ANGLO-AMERICAN
M MALE
F FEMALE
H HIGH
A AVERAGE
L LOW

FIGURE 49

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT
CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK

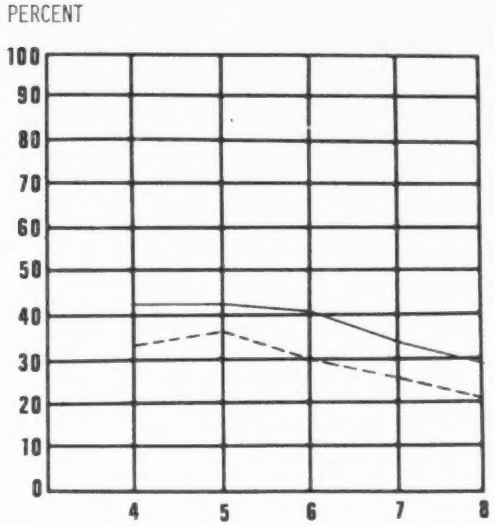


FIGURE 50

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE PRESIDENT WOULD HELP PEOPLE
WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT"

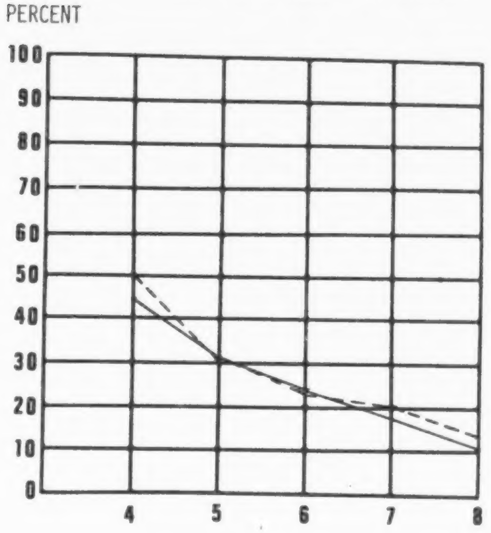


FIGURE 51

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE GOVERNOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE
WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT"

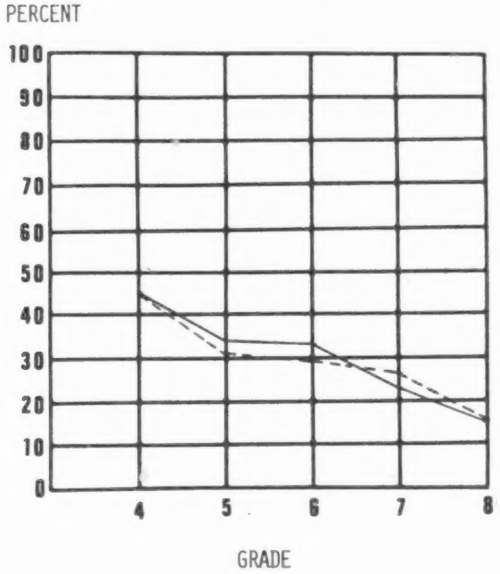


FIGURE 52

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MAYOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE
WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT"

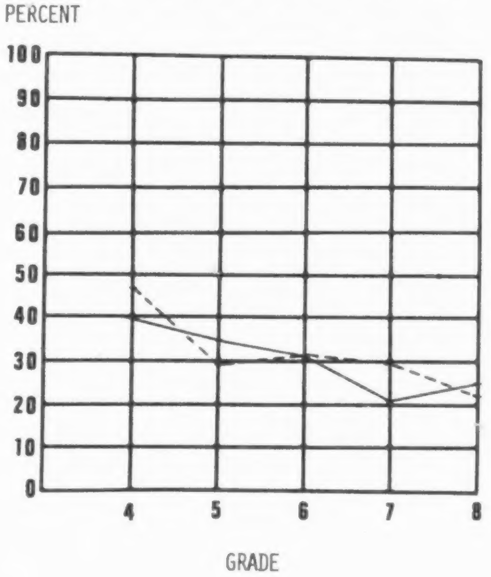


FIGURE 53

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE PRESIDENT
WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES

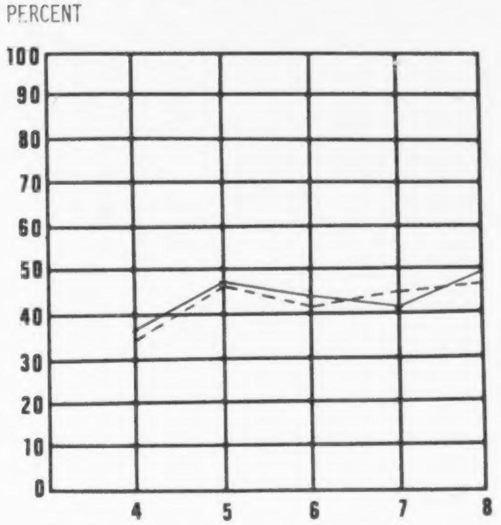


FIGURE 54

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNOR
WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES

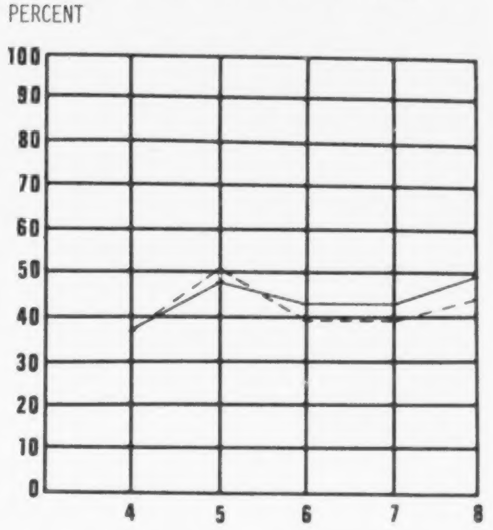


FIGURE 55

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE MAYOR
WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES

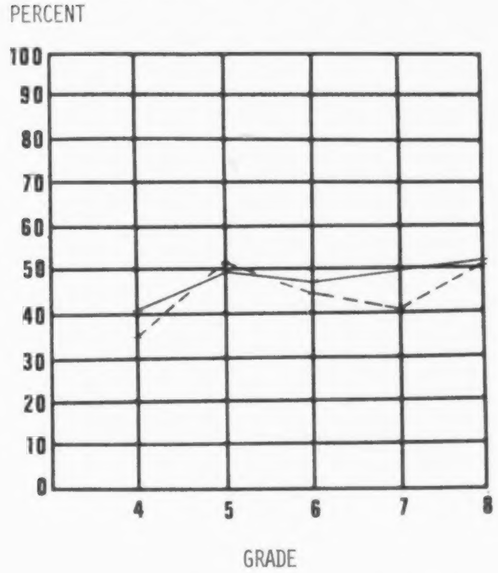


FIGURE 56

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT
CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE
"VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY SEX OF CHILD

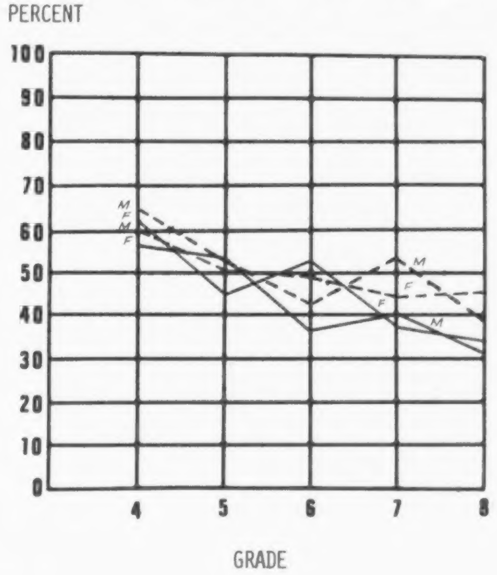


FIGURE 57

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY SEX OF CHILD

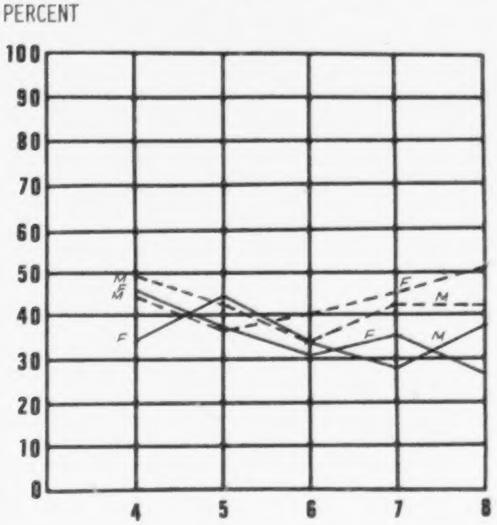


FIGURE 58

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE, BY SEX OF CHILD

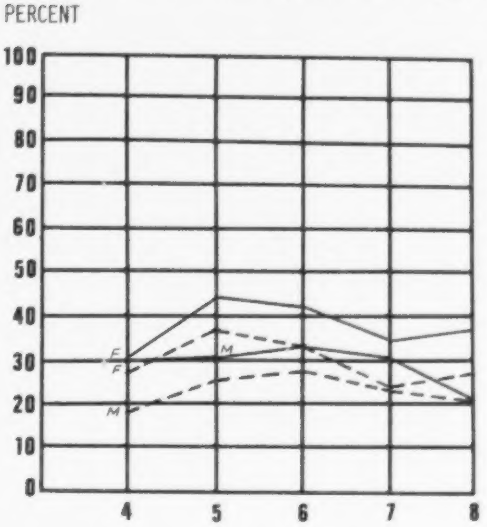


FIGURE 59

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK, BY SEX OF CHILD

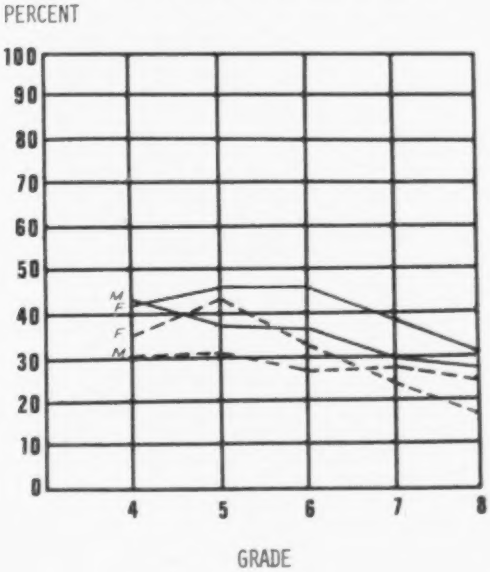


FIGURE 60

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY SOCIAL STATUS

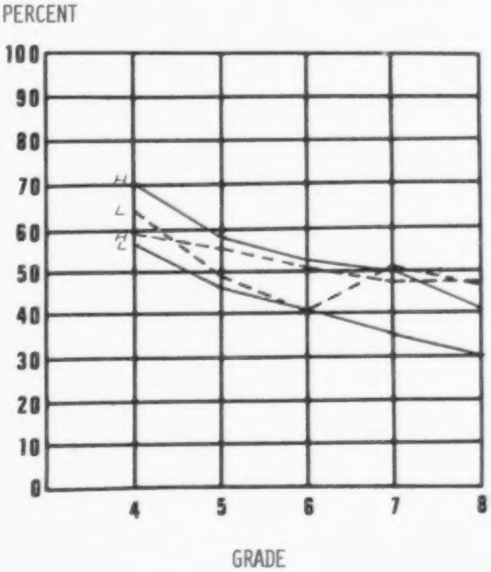


FIGURE 61

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY SOCIAL STATUS

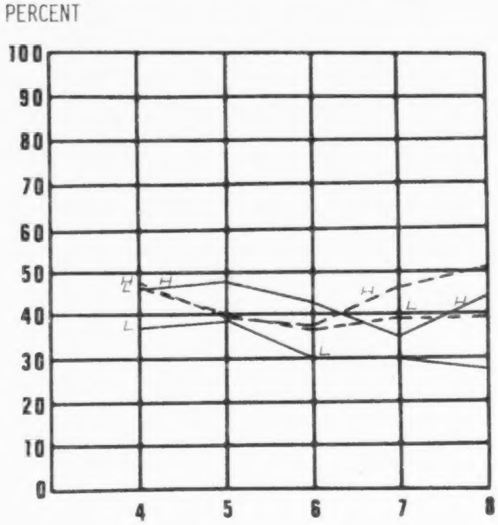


FIGURE 62

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE, BY SOCIAL STATUS

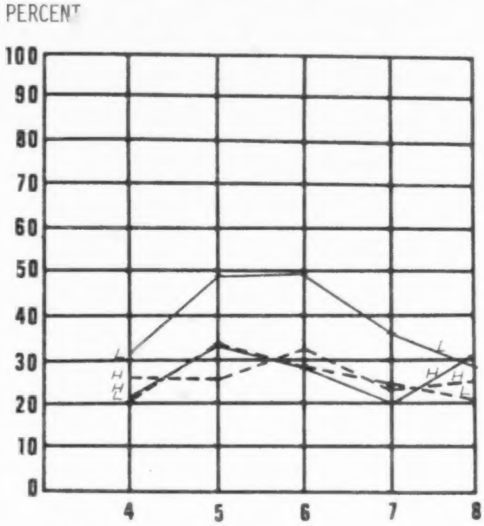


FIGURE 63

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

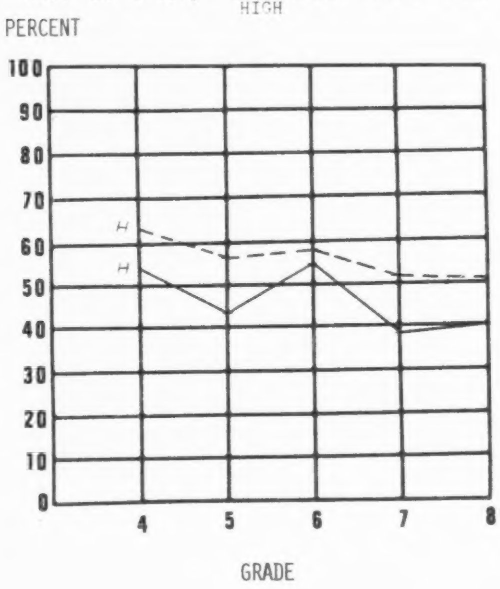


FIGURE 64

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

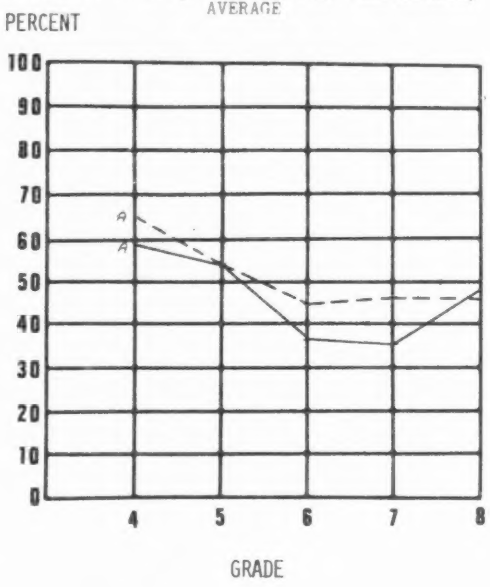


FIGURE 65

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

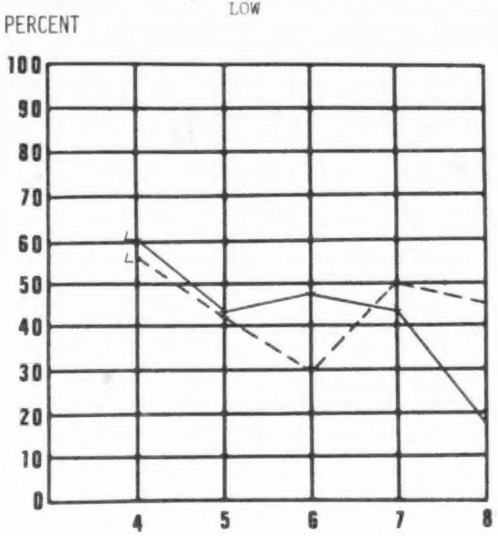


FIGURE 66

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

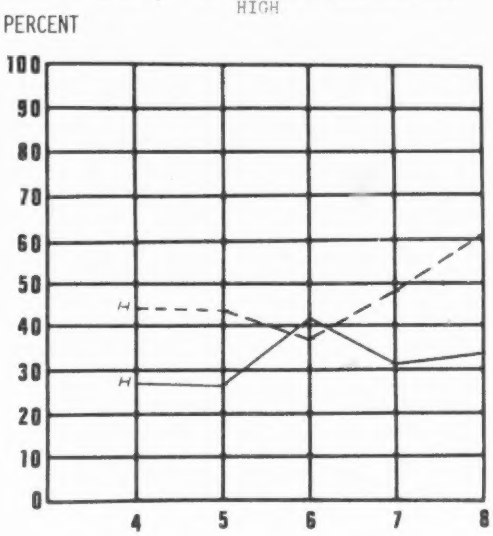


FIGURE 67

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

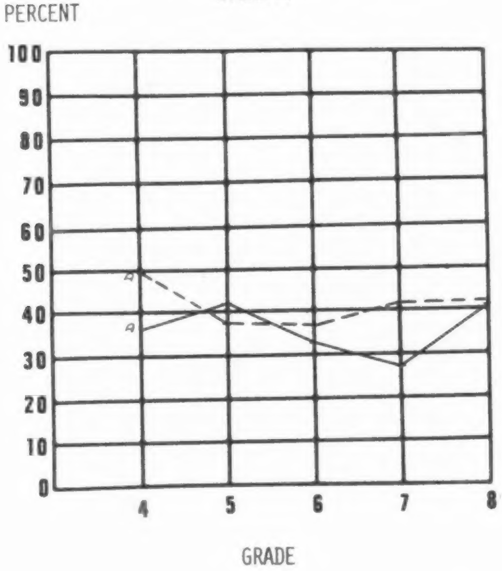
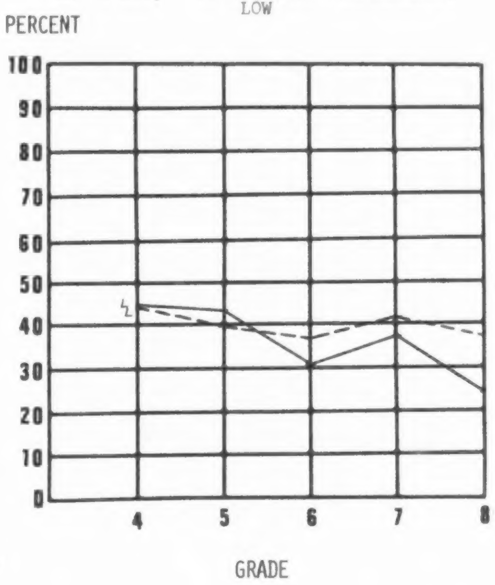


FIGURE 68

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW



Confidence in the responsiveness of government to people's needs which is reported more frequently among Anglo-American than Mexican-American children in the junior high school is apparently unrelated to their sex.[7] This information is expressed through the percentages reported in Figure 56. In general, fewer of the older Mexican-American boys and girls feel that the government is responsive, while more of the younger children believe it to be sensitive to their troubles. The pattern of differences at the junior high school level is depicted even more strikingly by the percentages which are presented in Figure 57: they show that older Mexican-American children of both sexes are more cynical about their potential political efficacy than are the older Anglo-American.

However, the percentages reported in Figure 58 show sex differences in the acquisition of attitudes at all grade levels. Within each ethnic group the higher percentages reported by girls are indicative of their greater uncertainty about whether or not the government cares about the troubles of individuals. Figure 59 shows that fewer Mexican-American girls than boys acquire attitudes concerning the government's sensitivity to what they think. A similar pattern appears to develop among Anglo-American children through the sixth grade, but by grade eight more girls than boys report attitudes. Ethnic group differences are also evident; in general, higher frequencies of "don't know" responses are reported by Mexican-American than by Anglo-American children.

Feelings about the responsiveness of government to the problems of individuals are related to social status; the frequencies reported by Mexican-Americans of lower status indicate that they have the least amount of confidence in the sensitivity of government to their problems. This is demonstrated clearly through the percentages presented in Figure 60. While Anglo-Americans of lower status exhibit cynicism with greater frequency than upper status children in grades five and six, their feelings change dramatically in junior high school. Although percentage differences are small, the frequencies reported by the Mexican-Americans of upper status suggest that they are generally more confident in government than are the Anglo-Americans during the elementary school years. The percentages reported in Figure 61 show that the Mexican-Americans of lower status are also the most doubtful about the sensitivity of government to what their people think. On the other hand, more of the upper status children from this ethnic group feel that the government is interested in their opinions. The frequencies reported by Anglo-Americans of each status group show that confidence in their political efficacy is at about the same level through grade six, but then at junior high school grades percentages for the high status group surge upward.

The previous discussion drew attention to feelings among Mexican-Americans of lower social status that the government is unconcerned about their troubles. The frequencies reported in Figure 62 show that before grade eight lower status Mexican-Americans report the highest rate of "don't know" responses; consequently their degree of attitude acquisition is low. In addition, fewer Mexican-Americans of lower status are acquiring attitudes relating to government's concern for what they think, but percentage differences are too slight to warrant a firm conclusion. As children proceed through the grades, there seem to be no clearly defined social status differences in perception of the responsiveness of the President, governor, and mayor to the troubles of individuals and their sensitivity to what people think. Furthermore, there appear to be no differences between social status groups in their degree of attitude acquisition.[8]

Children from each ethnic group who are approximately equivalent in academic performance do not perceive government responsiveness to their problems in the same way. The percentages which are reported indicate that in general, Anglo-Americans of high and average ability have greater expectations of government responsiveness to their troubles than have Mexican-Americans of equal ability (Figures 63, 64). On the other hand, for children of low academic performance the trend is reversed in the elementary school where Mexican-Americans have slightly higher expectations of government sensitivity to their problems than have Anglo-Americans of similar ability. However, in grades seven and eight another reversal occurs, and the older Mexican-American children seem to become more cynical (Figure 65). In general, perception of the government's concern for what people think is higher at each level of academic performance for Anglo-American children than for Mexican-American (Figures 66, 67, 68). The disparity between ethnic groups is greatest within the high ability category at the beginning and upper grades.

Children of equal academic performance from each ethnic group vary not only in their perception of the responsiveness and sensitivity of government but also in their degree of attitude acquisition. In general, at each performance level the Mexican-Americans report the greater percentages of "I don't know" responses; hence, they appear to be more uncertain than Anglo-Americans about government's concern for people (Figures 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74). Differences appear to be greatest within the upper ability category where Mexican-American children report higher percentages of "don't know" responses than do Anglo-American, although they are of equivalent academic performance.

Anticipation of help from the President is perceived about the same by children of equal ability. Expectations of help decline throughout the grades at about the same rate for children of each ethnic group, although within the high ability category more Anglo-Americans than Mexican-Americans in grades six, seven and eight perceive him with benevolence (Figures 75, 76, 77). On

FIGURE 69

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

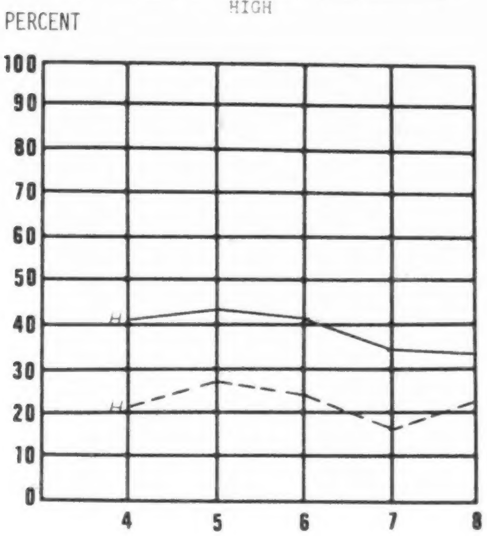


FIGURE 70

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

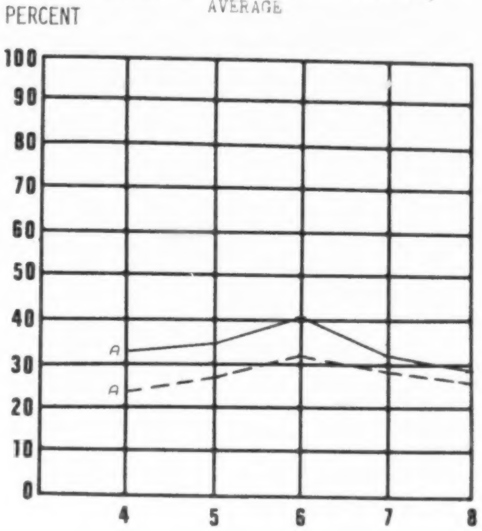


FIGURE 71

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT THE TROUBLES OF PEOPLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

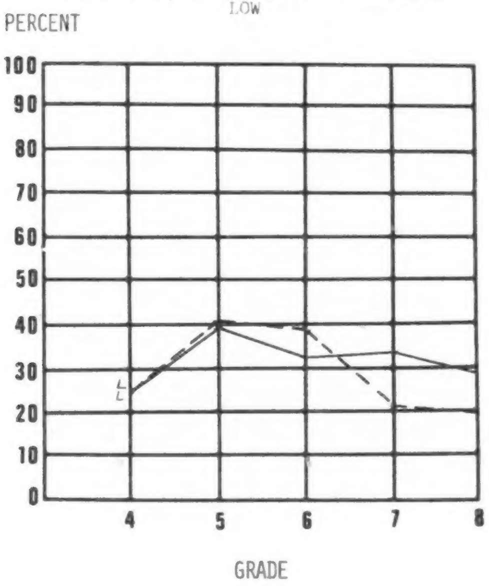


FIGURE 72

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

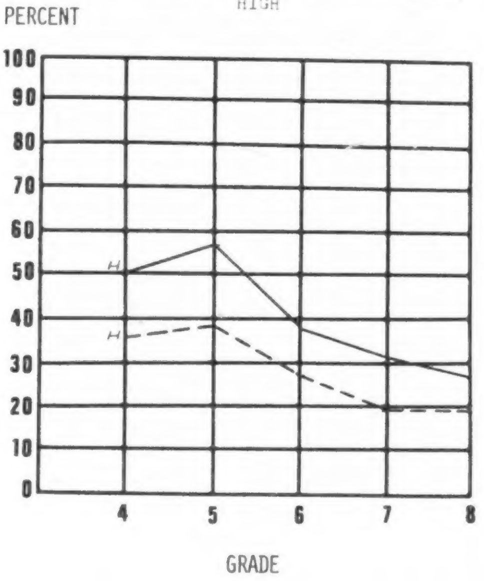


FIGURE 73

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

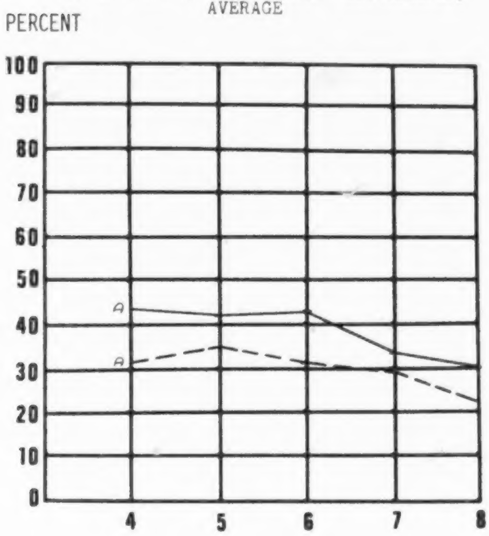


FIGURE 74

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CARES ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

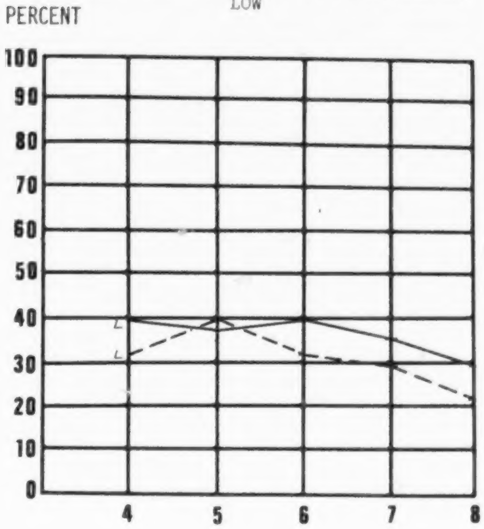


FIGURE 75

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

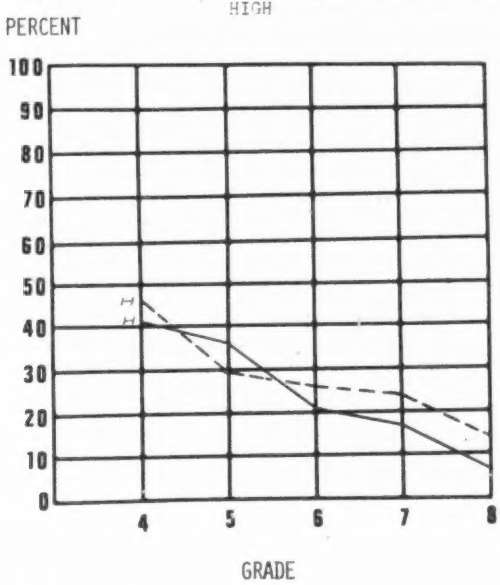


FIGURE 76

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

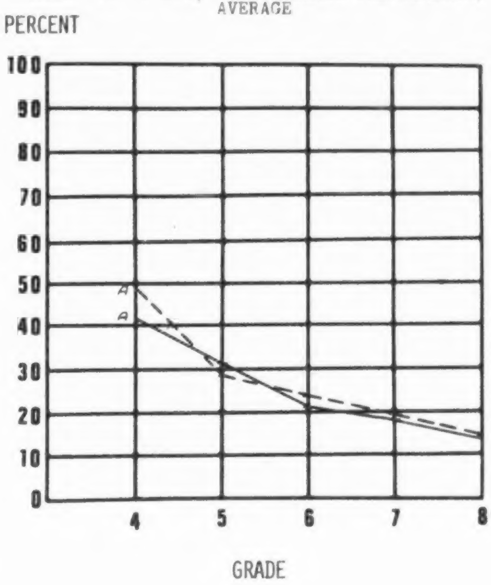


FIGURE 77

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

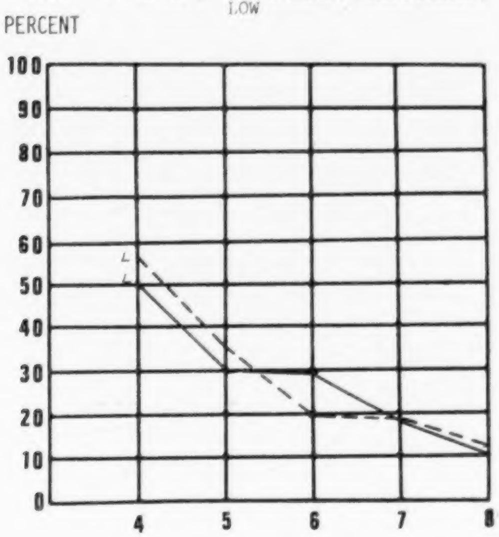


FIGURE 78

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

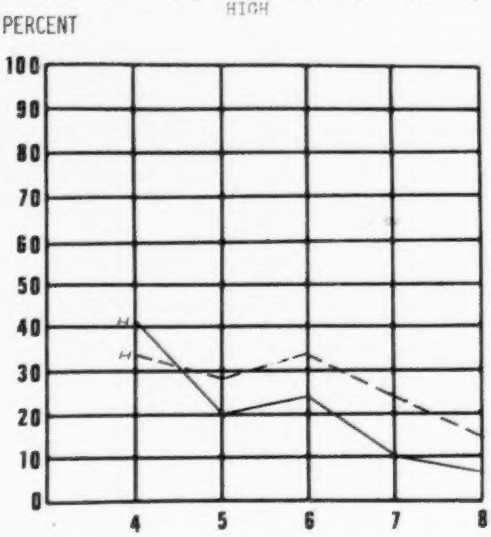


FIGURE 79

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

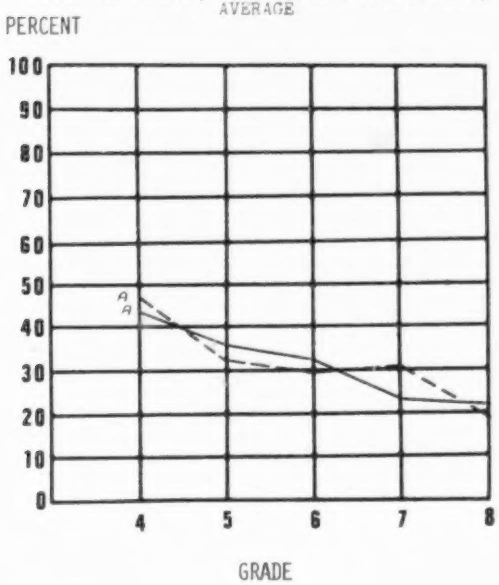


FIGURE 80

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

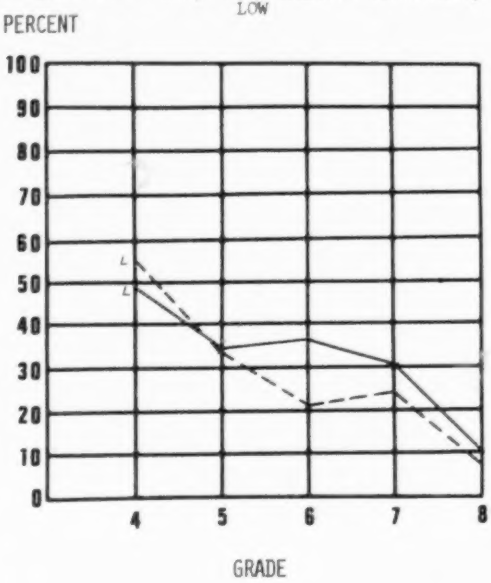


FIGURE 81

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE MAYOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES "VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

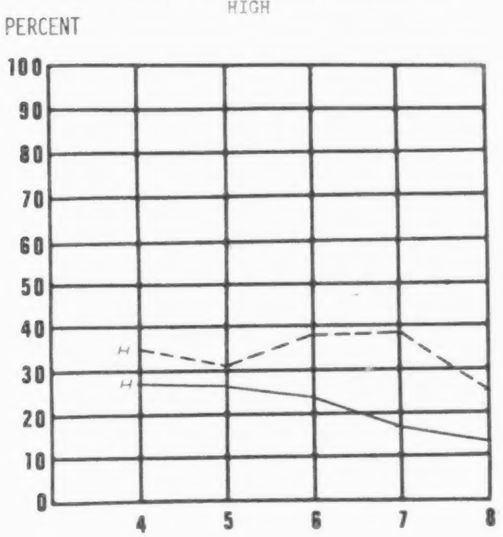


FIGURE 82

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE PRESIDENT WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

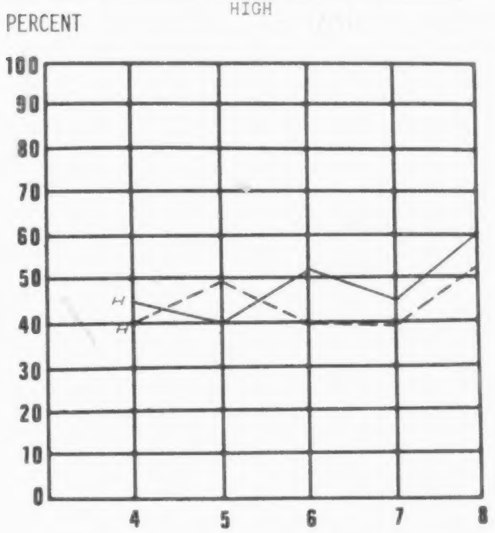


FIGURE 83

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

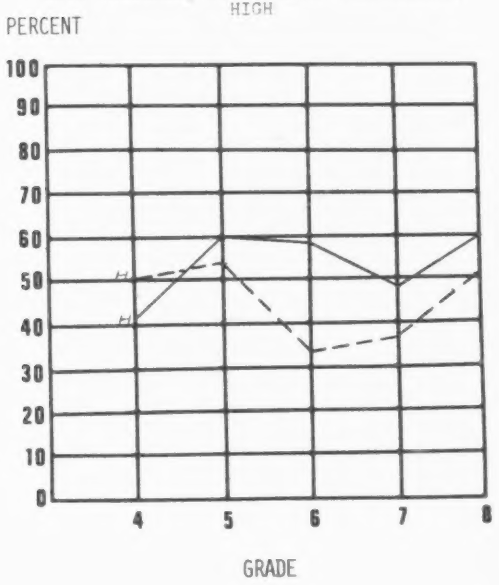


FIGURE 84

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE MAYOR WOULD HELP PEOPLE WITH TROUBLES, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

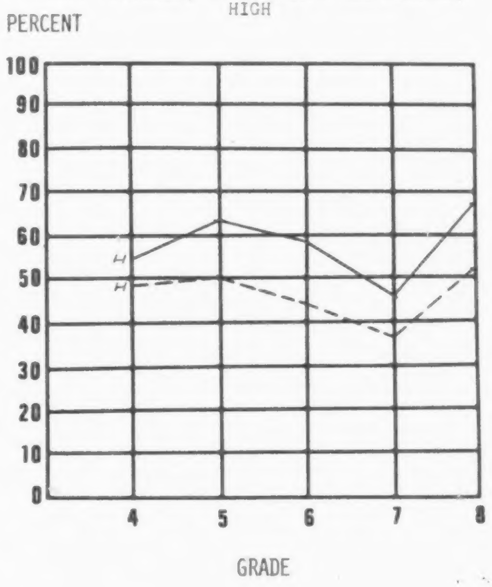


FIGURE 85

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE PRESIDENT IS DOING A GOOD JOB

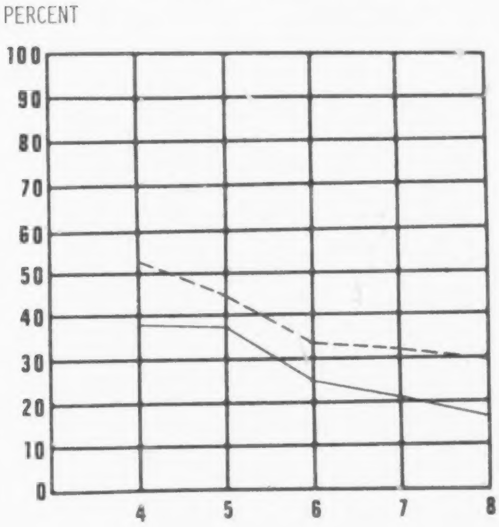


FIGURE 86

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" WHAT KIND
OF JOB THE PRESIDENT IS DOING

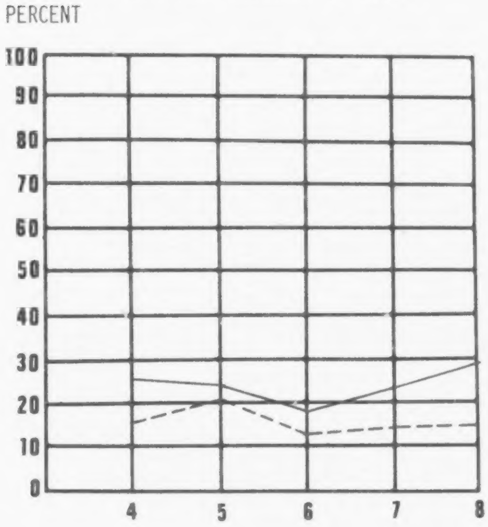


FIGURE 87

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE PRESIDENT IS DOING A GOOD JOB,
BY SEX OF CHILD

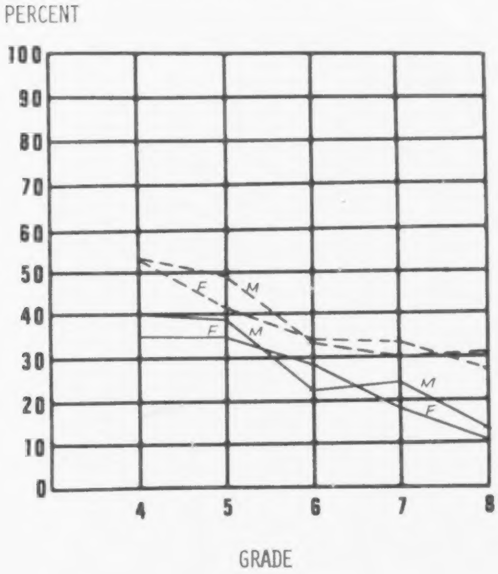


FIGURE 88

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE PRESIDENT IS DOING A GOOD JOB,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

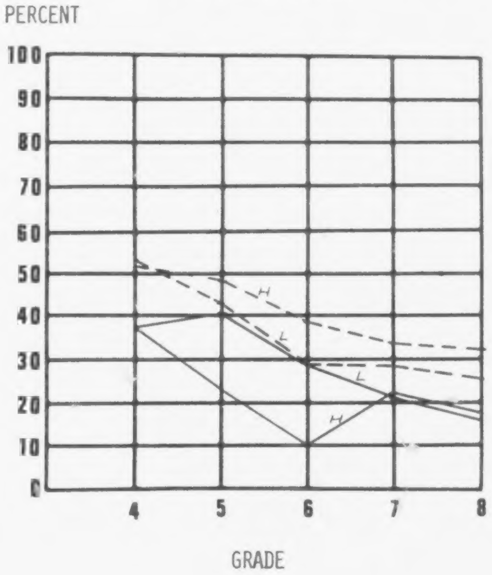


FIGURE 89

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE PRESIDENT IS DOING A GOOD JOB,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

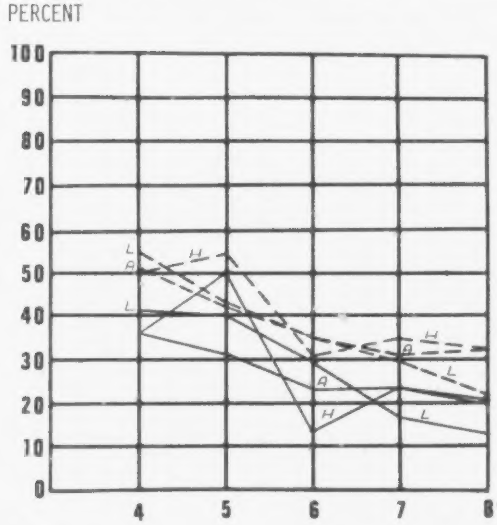


FIGURE 90

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW"
WHAT KIND OF A JOB THE PRESIDENT
IS DOING, BY SEX OF CHILD

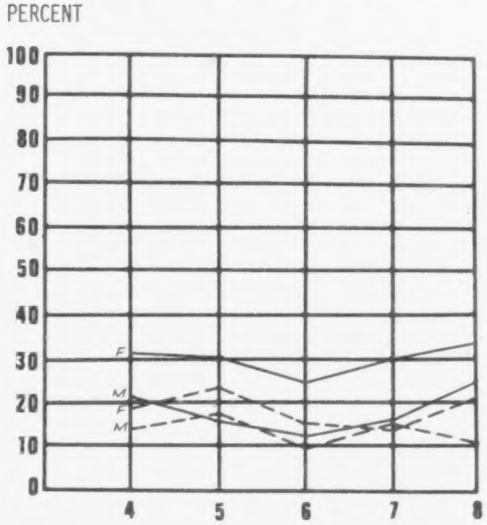


FIGURE 91

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW"
WHAT KIND OF A JOB THE PRESIDENT
IS DOING, BY SOCIAL STATUS

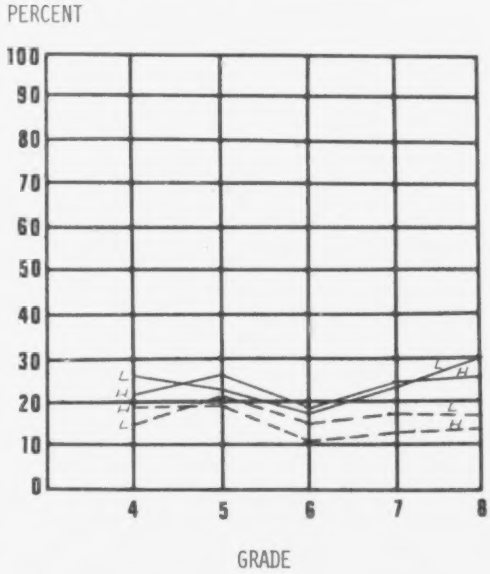
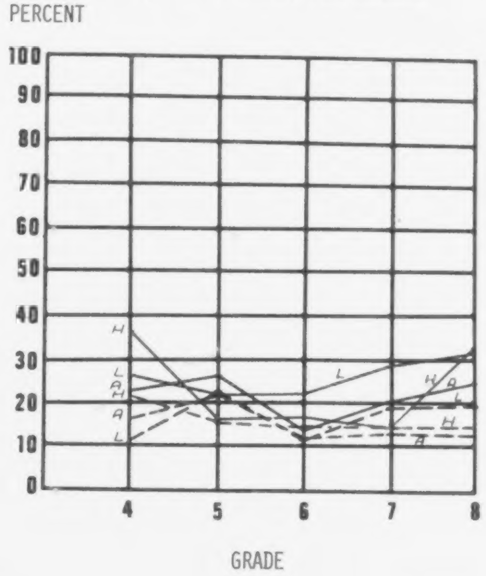


FIGURE 92

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW"
WHAT KIND OF A JOB THE PRESIDENT
IS DOING, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



the other hand, the percentages that are reported within the category of high academic performance indicate that greater percentages of Anglo-American children than Mexican-American feel that the governor is sensitive to their needs. Within the category of average ability, children from each ethnic group have similar feelings, but within the low performance group slightly higher percentages of Mexican-Americans are confident that the governor will help with their problems (Figures 78, 79, 80). It is clear from Figure 81 that greater percentages of Anglo-American children of high ability expect help from the mayor than do their Mexican-American counterparts of equal academic performance, but the data for the other two ability groups are inconclusive.[9]

The degree of attitude acquisition seems to vary most of all between the children of each ethnic group who are within the category of high academic performance. In general, the percentages reported by Mexican-Americans of high ability indicate that they are more uncertain about receiving assistance from the President, governor and mayor than are their Anglo-American counterparts (Figures 82, 83, 84). The data for the remaining two ability levels are inconclusive.[10]

In addition to the questionnaire items which are concerned with government responsiveness to the problems of individuals and sensitivity to popular opinion, children's feelings toward the structure of authority were also expressed through their responses to questions involving evaluation of political leaders. The percentages reported by Anglo-Americans indicate that they are more willing to rate the President as doing a "good job" than are the Mexican-Americans. The youngest children in both groups rate him relatively high, but the percentages decline considerably at successive grade levels (Figure 85). The Mexican-American children report the highest frequencies of "don't know" responses (Figure 86).

Ethnicity seems to be a dominant factor in children's evaluation of the President's performance. Mexican-American children of both sexes rate him less favorably than do the Anglo-American (Figure 87). In addition, Anglo-Americans of both status groups report higher percentages than do Mexican-Americans (Figure 88). Furthermore, the percentages reported by Anglo-Americans of all ability groups are higher than those of the three ability groups of Mexican-Americans (Figure 89). There is, however, an exception. Since the Anglo-Americans of upper social status rate the President higher than do the children of lower status, social class differences emerge within this ethnic group.

It was noted previously that Mexican-American children check "don't know" responses more often than do the Anglo-American (Figure 86). The percentages which they report indicate that the lowest rate of attitude acquisition is found among the Mexican-American girls (Figure 90). In addition, Mexican-Americans within both the upper and lower status groups also exhibit less attitude acquisition than do the Anglo-Americans (Figure 91). In general, higher percentages of "don't know" responses are reported by all three ability groups of Mexican-Americans, although the curve for the children of high academic performance fluctuates widely (Figure 92).[11]

Slight differences may be observed between ethnic groups in their evaluation of the governor. The frequencies which decline steadily at successive grade levels indicate that more young children rate the several leaders highly than do the older. Although differences are small, more Anglo-American children rate the governor as doing a "good job" than do Mexican-American (Figure 93). In their evaluation of the mayor, children again report frequencies which decline at higher grade levels, but no clearly defined differences between ethnic groups are observed (Figure 94).[12]

The percentages of "don't know" responses which are reported indicate the rate of attitude acquisition concerning the governor's performance remains relatively constant throughout the grades (Figure 95). While there do not appear to be large differences between the two ethnic groups in their degree of attitude development, the high percentages reported by girls indicate that sex differences exist. Figure 96 shows that the girls of each ethnic group are more in doubt than the males. On the other hand, the rate of attitude acquisition relating to the mayor's performance does not remain constant (Figure 97). At successive grade levels children report higher and higher percentages which express feelings of doubt, and well defined differences between the two ethnic groups are not observed.[13]

Section Summary

The most dramatic outcome observed in this section of Chapter III is the high level of alienation exhibited by Mexican-American children of lower social status. Among all groups they report with the lowest frequency feeling that the government is concerned with their problems, and the percentages decrease steadily at successively higher grade levels. On the other hand, Mexican-American children of upper social status report percentages which indicate a relatively high degree of confidence in the responsiveness of government. For the most part their level of confidence even surpasses that of the Anglo-American children! It is clear that in the elementary school feelings about the benevolence of government are related more to social status than to ethnic differences, and by grade eight the Mexican-Americans of lower social status are distinctive in their degree of alienation.

FIGURE 93

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE GOVERNOR IS DOING A GOOD JOB

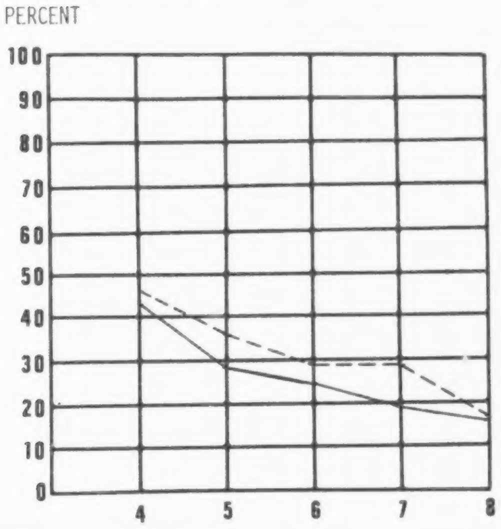


FIGURE 94

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MAYOR IS DOING A GOOD JOB

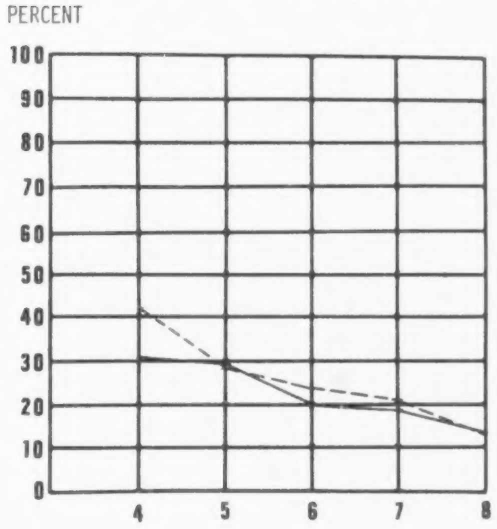


FIGURE 95

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" WHAT KIND
OF JOB THE GOVERNOR IS DOING

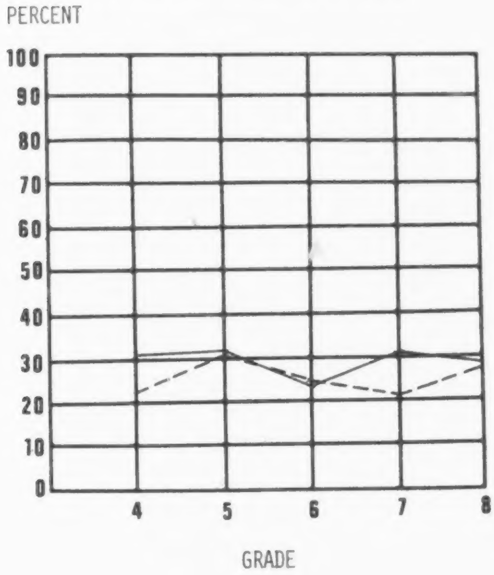


FIGURE 96

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY
"DON'T KNOW" WHAT KIND OF A JOB THE
GOVERNOR IS DOING, BY SEX OF CHILD

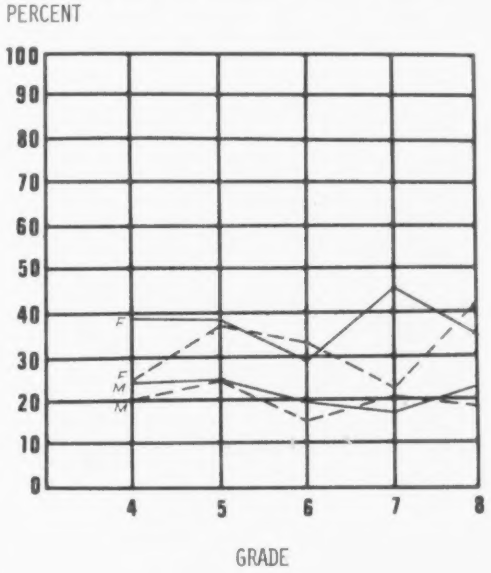


FIGURE 97

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW" WHAT KIND
OF A JOB THE MAYOR IS DOING

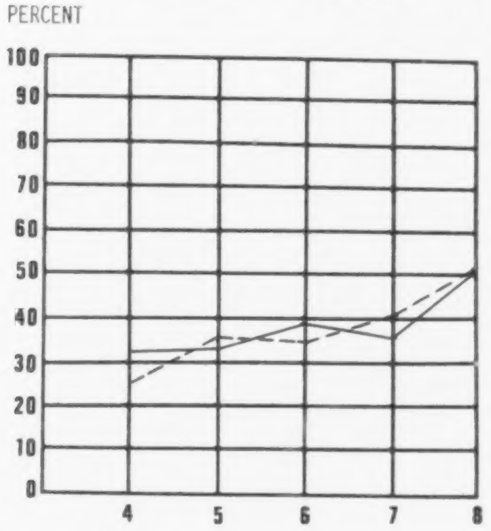


FIGURE 98

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE
POLICEMAN IS HELPING PEOPLE IN TROUBLE

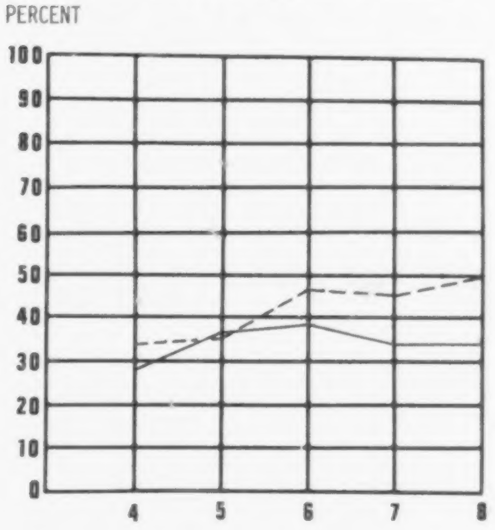


FIGURE 99

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE MOST
IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE POLICEMAN
IS CATCHING PEOPLE WHO BREAK THE LAW

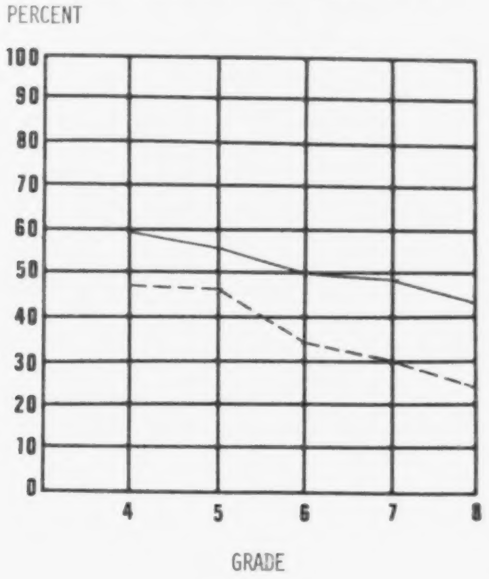
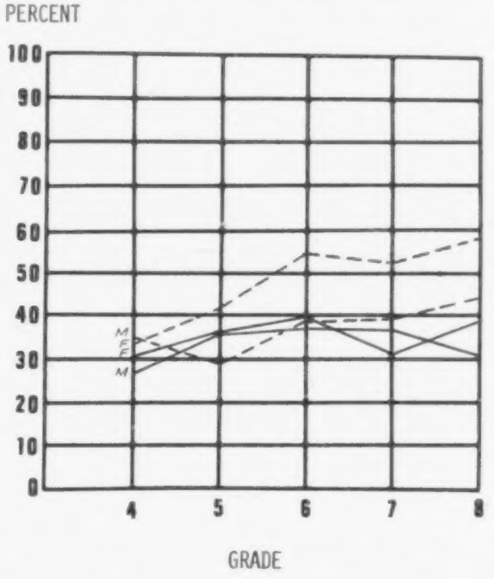


FIGURE 100

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF
THE POLICEMAN IS HELPING PEOPLE
IN TROUBLE, BY SEX OF CHILD



The estrangement of Mexican-Americans of lower social status is manifest again in their perception of government sensitivity to what people think. Particularly noteworthy are the low percentages reported by this group and the relatively high frequencies reported by Anglo-Americans of upper social status. The high incidence of "don't know" responses which is found among a large proportion of Mexican-Americans of lower status is another indication of their general lack of certainty about the degree of attentiveness that can be anticipated from government; but the declining percentages in grades seven and eight reflect increments in feeling that they can expect very little.

The feelings toward government which are expressed by the Mexican-American children of lower social status are probably influenced by the family environment. But since many children within this group are also in doubt about the responsiveness of government, one must also assume that they either lack information or are confused about the extent to which government is either benevolent or apathetic. It is likely that conflicting ideas about government are being presented to children simultaneously through the several agencies of socialization, and hence mixed feelings are generated. Regardless of the cause, in this part of the study an important problem has been identified with which the school might wish to concern itself: reducing feelings of political alienation among Mexican-American children of lower social status and improving feelings of efficacy.

The special needs of other children are also evident. Within each ethnic group fewer girls than boys are developing attitudes. Also, within each ability level fewer of the Mexican-American children develop attitudes, and it is surprising to discover that the differences between ethnic groups appear to be greatest among children of high academic performance. The fact that greater percentages of Mexican-Americans of high academic performance report "don't know" responses than do Anglo-Americans of equal ability supports the hypothesis that conflicting ideas that are generated by the several agencies of socialization are confusing the perceptive children who are the most rapid learners.

Children at successively higher grade levels exhibit more realism as they mature. Their relatively high level of confidence in the benevolence of political leaders declines with age, and both ethnic groups appear to be consistent in their expectations. The older children anticipate more help from the mayor than from the President and governor. Ethnic differences seem to account for variations within particular ability levels; the Anglo-Americans of high academic performance have greater confidence in the benevolence of the governor and the mayor than do their Mexican-American counterparts. On the other hand, Mexican-Americans of low ability have greater confidence in the governor's benevolence than have the Anglo-Americans of equal ability.

A large proportion of the children appear to be confused about the responsiveness of political leaders. The high rate of "don't know" responses reported by each ethnic group and the absence of slope to the curves indicate that within successively higher grade levels, very little is learned about how much personal assistance can be expected from political leaders. This is particularly true for the girls of each ethnic group who demonstrate a lower frequency of attitude acquisition than do the males. It is also true for Mexican-Americans of high ability who indicate much less attitude acquisition than do their Anglo-American counterparts. The school might wish to concern itself with this problem area for curriculum development, since it is evident that many children within each ethnic group are confused about their relationships with specific political leaders as well as with government in general.

At the beginning of this chapter several previous investigations of children's attitudes toward political leaders and government were referred to. Groups of children who are drawn from the mainstream of the American population perceive government and leaders as highly benevolent. Study of a unique subculture by Dean Jaros and his associates, on the other hand, revealed that the children sampled in Appalachia manifest a high degree of cynicism toward political objects, including the President. The inconsistency in research results suggests that the conclusions of the former studies are applicable only to the dominant culture. This hypothesis is supported by the research reported in this section; surely the Mexican-American children of lower social status exhibit considerable cynicism and alienation.

In the elementary school, social status seems to be another attribute which affects the attitude of each ethnic group toward government: the Anglo-American children of lower status find government less benign than those of high social status. In grades seven and eight, the unique interaction between lower social status position and Mexican-American ethnicity which is also evident supports the hypothesis that some of the early political socialization research findings may not be applicable to particular subgroups. The high percentages of "don't know" responses to questions about the benevolence of political leaders indicate that children do not necessarily consider them to be benign. Indeed, as they get older large percentages of children continue to be uncertain about the benevolence of political leaders.

What is particularly striking about children's evaluations of the President is the absence of high levels of esteem and satisfaction with the Chief Executive's job performance that had been previously reported by investigators: Greenstein (1965), Hess and Torney (1967), and Easton and Dennis (1968). Fred Greenstein argues that idealization of leaders is an immature political response. The results of his study indicate that the children of low socioeconomic status rate leaders more favorably than do those of upper status, and he concludes, therefore, that the child of lower status has a less well-developed capacity for participation in political life.[14]

The children sampled in the California study rate the President much lower than did the children of New Haven. Table 1 presents the percentages reported in both studies for the children who are most comparable: upper and lower status Anglo-Americans.[15] These data indicate that although the New Haven investigation utilized five categories of response, while the California study employs just four, the percentages reported by the children of New Haven are very much greater for the most positive category of response. In addition, except at grade four, the children of lower social status within the California study report percentages that are smaller than those reported by the children of upper status. If one accepts the Greenstein hypothesis that higher percentages denote less political maturity, one would have to conclude that the children of lower status included in the California study have greater political maturity than have the children of New Haven. Given the increased influence of the mass media over the years and the more recent political and social disorders which have swept the country, this is a tempting hypothesis to accept. However, it is more probable that the lower percentages reported by the children sampled in the present investigation reflect the incumbent President's popularity in southern California during a period of high unemployment, high inflation, and high taxes.

Table 1

Social Status Differences in Evaluation of the President
Within the Highest Category of Each Study*

Grade	4	5	6	7	8
New Haven study:					
Upper status	79%	68%	54%	51%	53%
Lower status	82	80	75	77	68
California study:					
Upper status	51	49	38	34	32
Lower status	54	43	28	29	26

*The New Haven study utilizes five categories: Very Good, Fairly Good, Not Very Good, Bad, Don't Know. The California study utilizes four categories: A good job, A fair job, A bad job, and Don't know.

Feelings About the Compliance System

In the first section of this chapter, attitudes toward the structure of authority were analyzed through examination of children's perception of government responsiveness to the problems of individuals and its sensitivity to popular opinion. In addition, children's evaluations of political leaders were studied to acquire insight into the extent of their idealization of authority. In this section of Chapter III, attention is given to children's feelings about aspects of the compliance system which include the police, judges, and law. The policeman's role is considered first. Several questions were designed to elicit responses from children which would reveal their perception of the functions of the policeman, his fairness in fulfilling his role, his responsiveness to individuals who need help, and the degree to which they would respect his authority.

Mexican-American and Anglo-American children view the policeman differently: more of the former group conceive of his role as law enforcer, while more the latter perceive him as the protector who provides assistance in time of need. Figures 98 and 99 depict children's perceptions of the function of the policeman, respectively, within two categories: "help people in trouble" and "catch law breakers." At the earliest grades higher percentages of the Mexican-American children view the policeman as a law enforcer and the decline in percentages at successive grade levels is less sharp than are those of the Anglo-American (Figure 99). Perception of the policeman's role as that of providing help to the citizenry is not uppermost in the minds of the younger children, but belief in his benevolence increases among Anglo-Americans at successively higher grade levels (Figure 98). Among the Mexican-Americans there is no growth in such feeling. The Anglo-American girls are chiefly responsible for the percentage rise as children get older, but the Mexican-American girls do not exhibit a corresponding change in attitude (Figure 100).

The frequencies reported by Mexican-American children of lower social status remain relatively constant throughout the grades. The Mexican-American children of upper status and the Anglo-American children of both status groups parallel one another through grade six in their patterns of growth in feeling that the policeman is benevolent. Thereafter, in grades seven and eight, percentages drop sharply for Mexican-American children of upper status, while they remain stable for the Anglo-American of similar status (Figure 101).

Among children of high academic performance, the Anglo-American report percentages which increase steadily at successively higher grade levels. The growth pattern of Mexican-Americans of equal ability parallels that of the Anglo-American children from grades four to six, but thereafter percentages decline sharply (Figure 102). The percentages reported by

FIGURE 101

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF
THE POLICEMAN IS HELPING PEOPLE
IN TROUBLE, BY SOCIAL STATUS

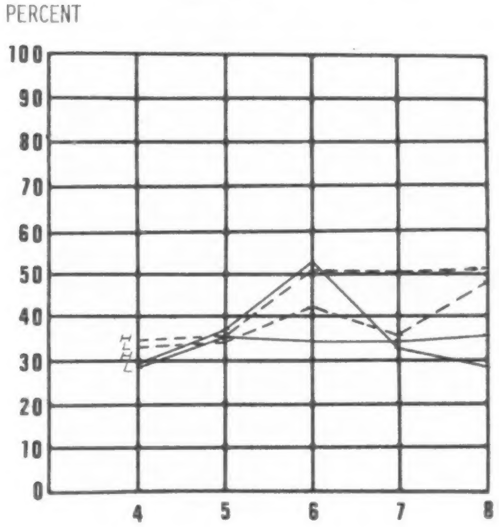


FIGURE 102

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF
THE POLICEMAN IS HELPING PEOPLE
IN TROUBLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
HIGH

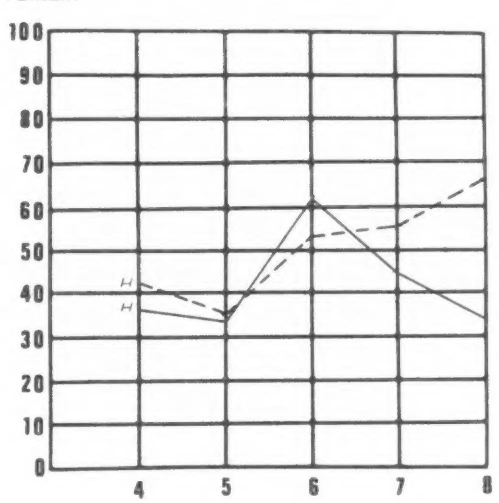


FIGURE 103

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF
THE POLICEMAN IS HELPING PEOPLE
IN TROUBLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
AVERAGE

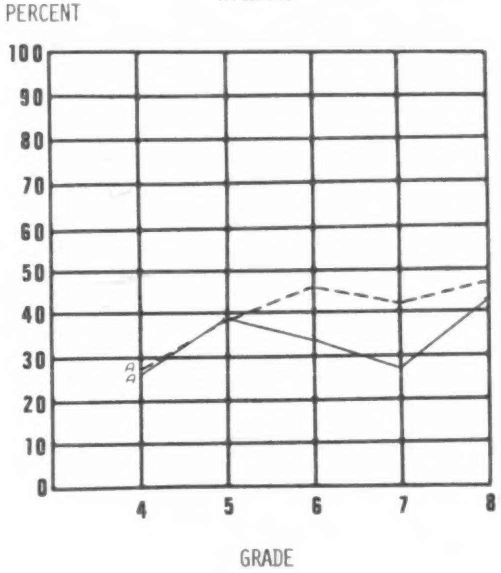


FIGURE 104

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF
THE POLICEMAN IS HELPING PEOPLE
IN TROUBLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
LOW

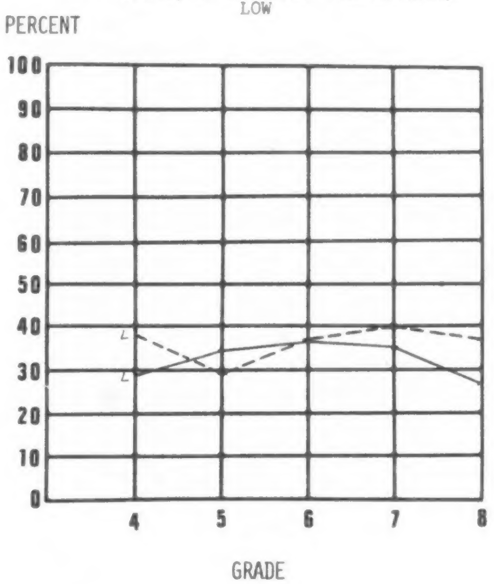


FIGURE 105

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE POLICEMAN IS CATCHING PEOPLE WHO BREAK THE LAW, BY SEX OF CHILD

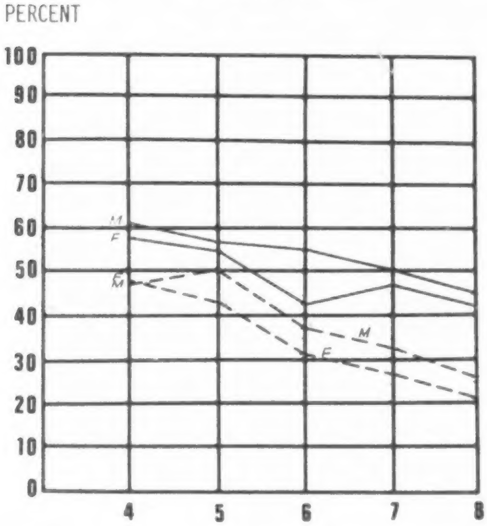


FIGURE 106

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE POLICEMAN IS CATCHING PEOPLE WHO BREAK THE LAW, BY SOCIAL STATUS

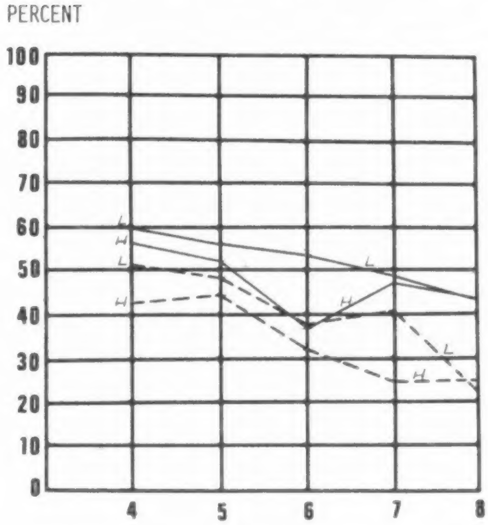


FIGURE 107

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE POLICEMAN IS CATCHING PEOPLE WHO BREAK THE LAW, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

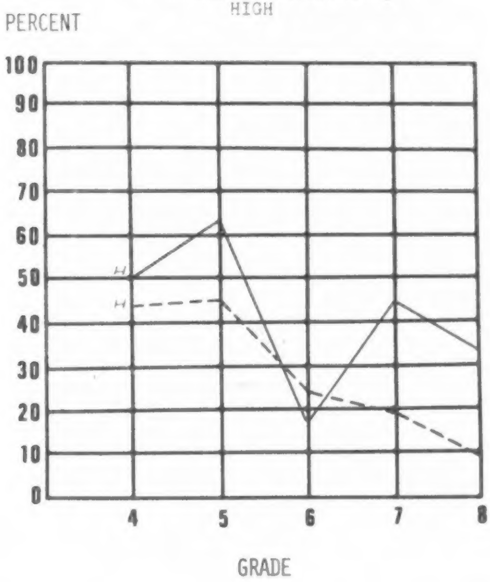
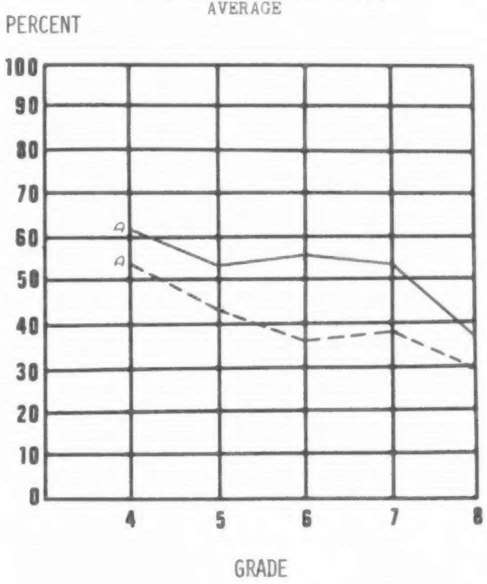


FIGURE 108

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE POLICEMAN IS CATCHING PEOPLE WHO BREAK THE LAW, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE



Anglo-American children of average ability increase from grades four to six and then remain at approximately the same level in grades seven and eight, while the frequencies reported by Mexican-American children fluctuate from grade to grade (Figure 103). The children of each ethnic group within the category of low academic performance report percentages which are similar, and they remain relatively constant throughout the grades (Figure 104).

Perception of policemen in the law enforcement role is reported more frequently by Mexican-Americans than by Anglo-Americans, and it is affected very little by such attributes as sex of child, social status, and academic performance. Factors associated with ethnicity emerge as the principal sources of differences. Among the Mexican-American children, both boys and girls report higher percentages in this category than do Anglo-American (Figure 105). The Mexican-Americans of lower social status report with highest frequency perception of the policeman in the law enforcement role, and those of upper social status report frequencies which are second highest in order. The percentages reported by Anglo-Americans of lower social status appear next. In general, the Anglo-Americans of upper social status perceive the policeman in his enforcement role with lower frequency (Figure 106). Within each level of academic performance, the Mexican-Americans report perception of policemen in the law enforcement role with higher frequency than do the Anglo-Americans of similar ability. Only one exception is observed at grade six within the high ability group (Figures 107, 108, 109).

The discussions in the previous paragraphs which describe how children of the two ethnic groups view the policeman are principally focused upon diffuse attitudes toward the police in general. However, the children were also asked to answer a more specific question: "If a policeman knew that you needed some help, what would he do?" In this hypothetical situation it was expected that the child would reveal whether or not he would anticipate help from an individual policeman in response to a particular need. The percentages of children who feel that a policeman would help them a lot or very much when they are in need of help are depicted in Figure 110.

There is no question that children at all grade levels are very confident that an individual policeman will assist them during an emergency, but declining percentages at successively higher grades may be observed among the Mexican-Americans. Factors associated with ethnicity rather than sex seem to account for the disparity between the responses reported by the two groups, since differences do not disappear when the data are classified by sex of child (Figure 111). The decline in percentages at higher grade levels is even sharper among Mexican-Americans of upper social status who grow more cynical about the possibility of receiving help from a policeman (Figure 112).

Since members of upper social status groups are generally supportive of the police, this deviation from the norm could possibly be significant, but the size of the sample is rather small and therefore the data can only be viewed as suggestive.

Within each level of academic performance, Anglo-American children report with higher frequency than do Mexican-American their belief that a policeman would assist them if help were needed. The percentages reported by each ethnic group within the high and average ability categories remain consistently high (Figures 113, 114). Within the average ability group a reversal occurs at grade five where Mexican-Americans report higher percentages than do Anglo-Americans. The Mexican-Americans of low academic performance report declining percentages at successively higher grade levels; they appear to grow more cynical about the possibility of receiving help from the police as they get older (Figure 115).

In addition to the information requested about the responsiveness of particular policemen and the functions of the police in general, the investigation also sought to find out if children believe that the police treat people fairly. Figure 116 shows that beginning at the early grades, fewer Mexican-American than Anglo-American children perceive the policeman as treating people fairly, and these attitudes remain relatively constant throughout the five grades. In addition, Mexican-Americans also report with greater frequency than do Anglo-Americans doubt about whether or not the police are fair. However, this uncertainty declines among successively higher grade groups and instead, greater percentages of Mexican-American children indicate their belief that policemen are unfair (Figure 117 and Table 2).

Factors associated with ethnicity account for differences among children when the responses are analyzed further by sex of child. Fewer Mexican-Americans of either sex perceive the policeman as treating people fairly in comparison with the Anglo-Americans (Figure 118). The sharpest distinctions between the two ethnic groups appear when children are grouped by social status: the percentage differences are greatest among children of upper social status (Figure 119). Ethnicity continues as the factor which accounts for differences among children when the responses are grouped according to ability (Figures 120, 121, 122). At each level of academic performance where the two ethnic groups are compared, smaller percentages of the Mexican-Americans anticipate fair treatment. Within the high performance category, the percentages reported by Anglo-Americans increase, generally, at successively higher grade levels; the trend is toward growth in readiness to view the policeman as one who treats people fairly. Within the same category, the trend is reversed for the Mexican-Americans; the general decline in percentages indicates that they grow more cynical.

FIGURE 109

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE MOST
IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE POLICEMAN
IS CATCHING PEOPLE WHO BREAK THE LAW,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
LOW

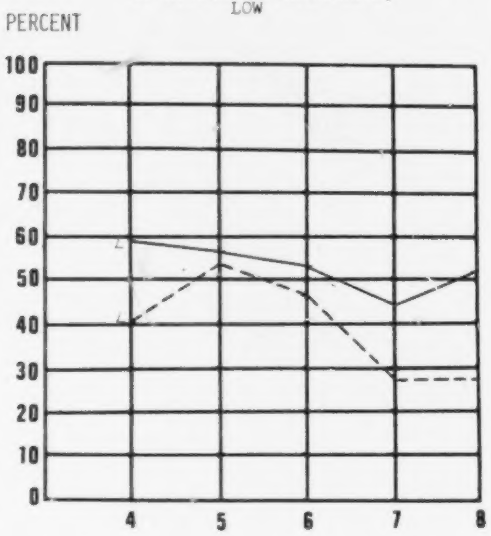


FIGURE 110

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
IN RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR NEED,
A POLICEMAN WOULD HELP
"VERY MUCH" OR "A LOT"

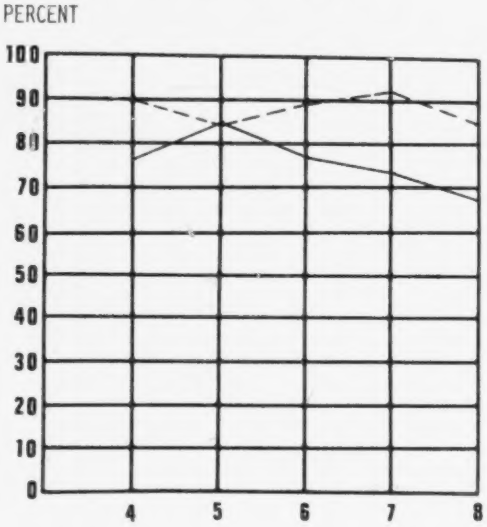


FIGURE 111

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
IN RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR NEED,
A POLICEMAN WOULD HELP "VERY MUCH"
OR "A LOT," BY SEX OF CHILD

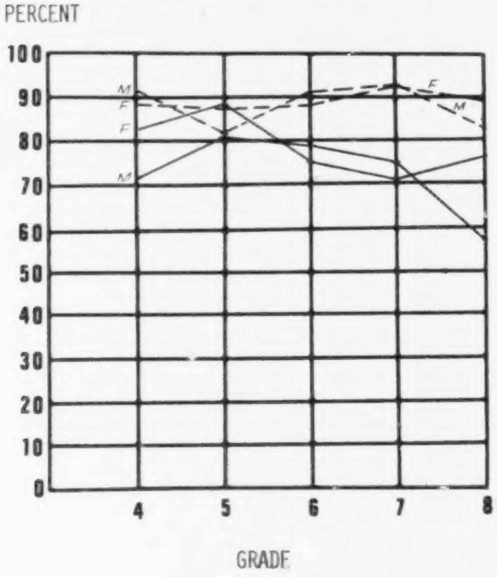


FIGURE 112

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
IN RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR NEED,
A POLICEMAN WOULD HELP "VERY MUCH"
OR "A LOT," BY SOCIAL STATUS

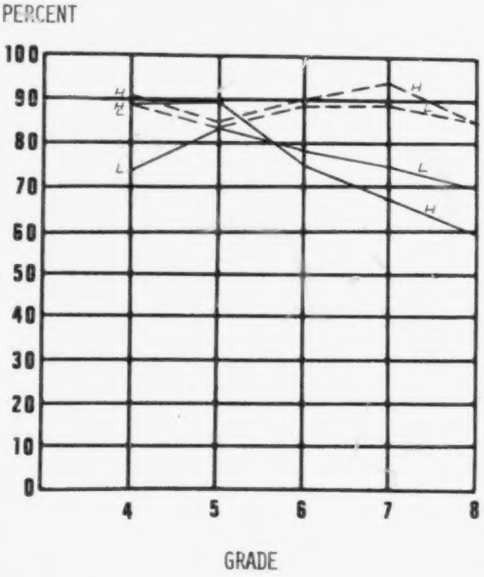


FIGURE 113

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
IN RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR NEED,
A POLICEMAN WOULD HELP "VERY MUCH"
OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
HIGH

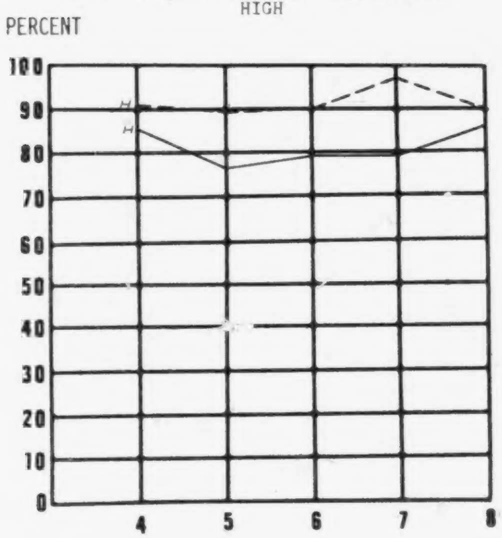


FIGURE 114

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
IN RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR NEED,
A POLICEMAN WOULD HELP "VERY MUCH"
OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
AVERAGE

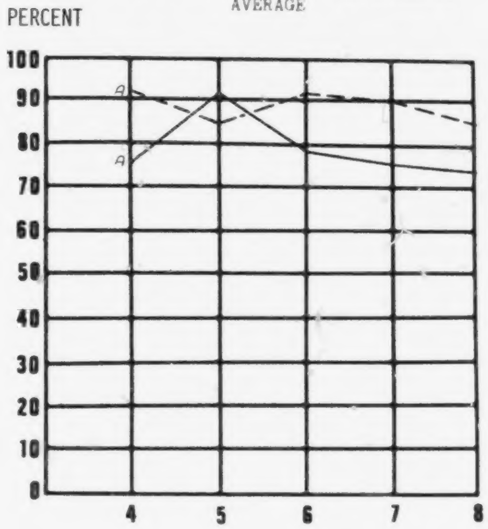


FIGURE 115

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
IN RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR NEED,
A POLICEMAN WOULD HELP "VERY MUCH"
OR "A LOT," BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
LOW

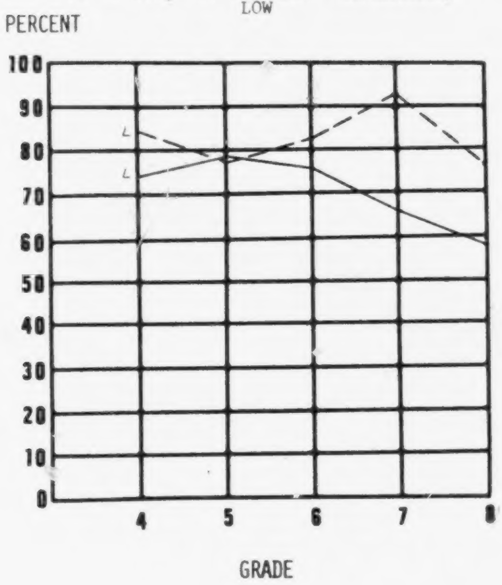


FIGURE 116

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
POLICEMEN ARE FAIR

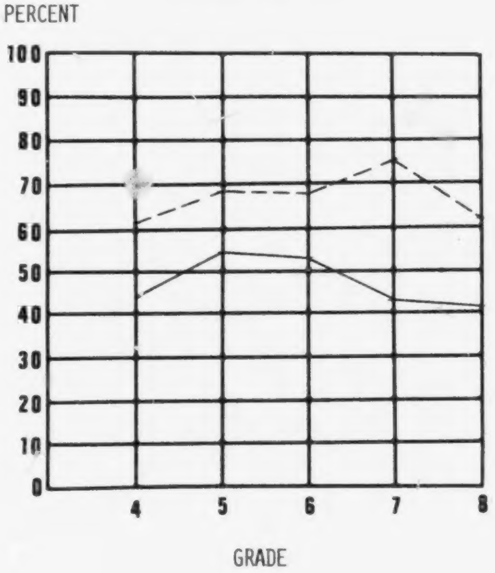


FIGURE 117

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW"
IF POLICEMEN ARE FAIR

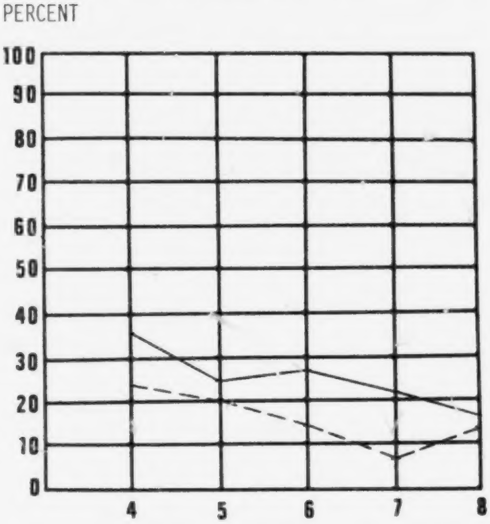


FIGURE 118

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
POLICEMEN ARE FAIR,
BY SEX OF CHILD

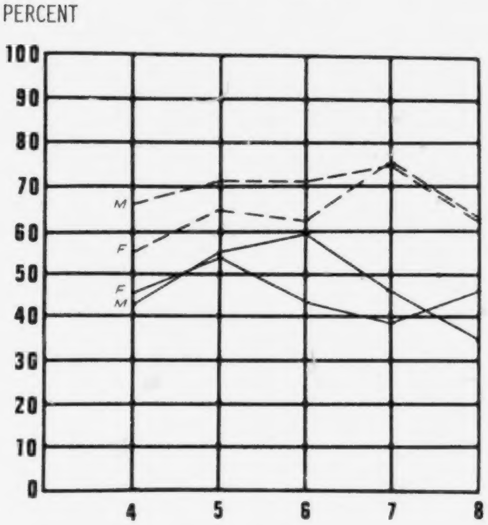


FIGURE 119

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
POLICEMEN ARE FAIR,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

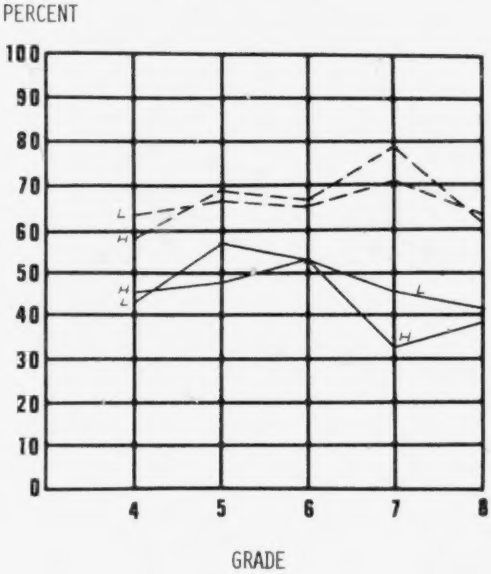


FIGURE 120

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
POLICEMEN ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
HIGH

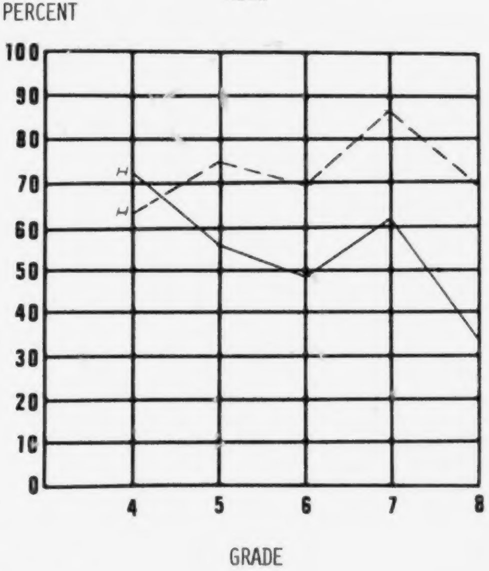


FIGURE 121

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
POLICEMEN ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
AVERAGE

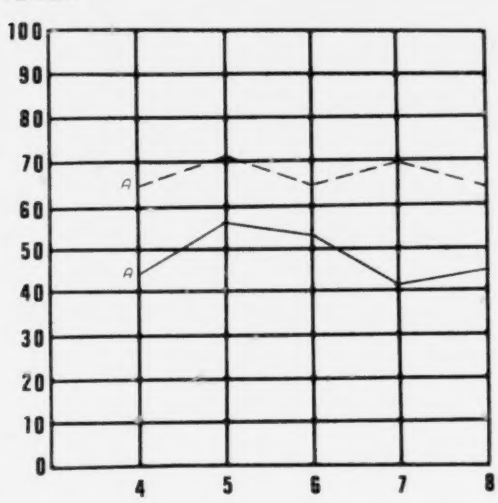


FIGURE 122

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
POLICEMEN ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
LOW

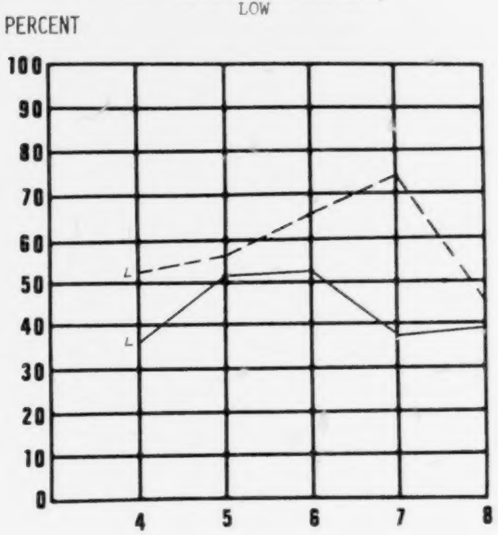


FIGURE 123

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
JUDGES ARE FAIR

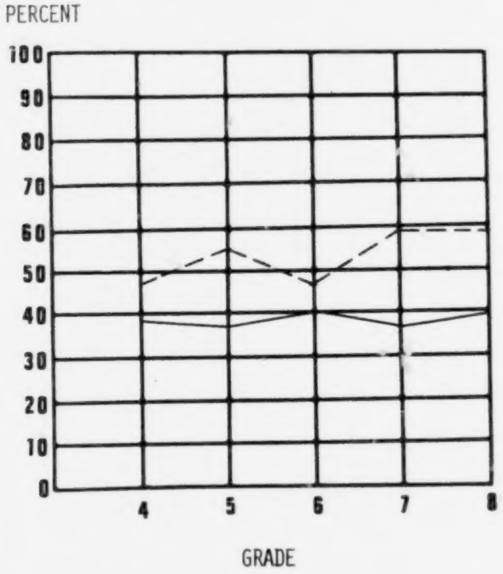


FIGURE 124

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
JUDGES ARE FAIR,
BY SEX OF CHILD

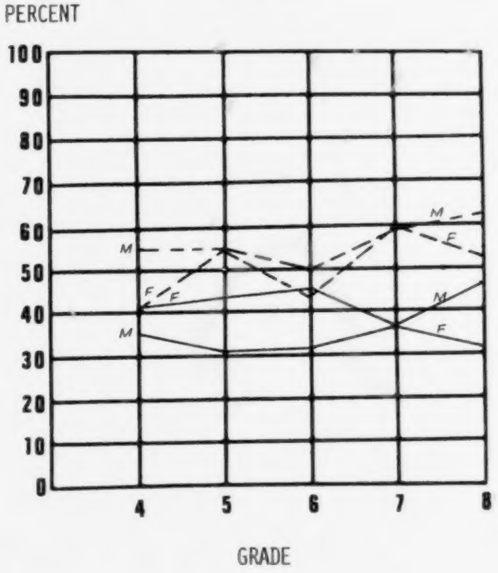


Table 2

The Percentage of Responses Within the "No" Alternative to Statements Concerning the Fairness of Police, Judges and the Law

Grade	4	5	6	7	8
Most people I know are treated fairly by policemen:					
Mexican-American	18.4	19.5	19.8	28.3	36.9
Anglo-American	12.1	11.3	18.5	16.2	23.8
Most people I know are treated fairly by judges:					
Mexican-American	14.5	22.5	19.0	20.2	20.8
Anglo-American	14.5	12.2	18.2	10.9	13.0
All laws are fair:					
Mexican-American	18.4	26.3	32.6	46.8	45.2
Anglo-American	23.0	32.3	53.9	50.0	68.0

The decline in percentages of "don't know" responses indicates that more and more children acquire attitudes about the fairness of police as they get older (Figure 117). Indeed, Table 2 shows that increasing percentages of children of each ethnic group express belief that the police are unfair. When the data are also organized by sex of child, social status, and level of ability higher percentages of Mexican-American than Anglo-American children are unsure about the fairness of police; factors associated with ethnicity appear to account for differences.[16]

In view of the feeling of benevolence which many Anglo-Americans associate with police and the general disinclination of Mexican-Americans to view police in this role, it is also of interest to find out if there are differences between the two groups in their readiness to respond to the policeman's authority. Table 3 provides information about children's anticipated reactions when they are asked the question: "If you think that a policeman is wrong in what he tells you to do, what would you do?" Since this is a simulated situation, it gives the child an opportunity to make anticipatory responses without his having to face the actual consequences of the behavior. Yet, since the percentages of children who indicate that they would not comply with an unjust request from an authority figure is only about 11%, it is quite evident that the idea of defying a policeman is almost unthinkable. This information is given in the last column of Table 3.

Fifty-seven percent of the children indicate that they would comply without question to the policeman's demand; they

Table 3

Anticipated Response to the Authority of Policemen*

Grade	4	5	6	7	8	Children of all Grades	Children of Both Ethnic Groups
Do what he says and forget it:							
Mexican-American	21.5%	16.1%	16.9%	11.0%	11.9%	15.9%	15.0%
Anglo-American	16.2	16.9	14.1	12.0	11.9	14.4	
Do what he says and tell parents:							
Mexican-American	39.9	49.2	37.6	34.7	25.0	38.2	42.3
Anglo-American	56.9	49.7	42.9	41.0	30.9	45.1	
Do what he says and ask him why:							
Mexican-American	20.2	18.6	22.7	22.5	31.0	23.5	22.4
Anglo-American	14.5	18.6	24.8	32.3	32.0	23.7	
Do what he says and tell him he is wrong:							
Mexican-American	6.6	4.7	7.9	9.2	11.3	7.6	9.4
Anglo-American	4.4	6.1	8.2	7.1	11.5	7.3	
I would not do what he told me to do:							
Mexican-American	8.8	10.6	13.6	19.7	19.6	14.8	11.3
Anglo-American	6.5	7.0	8.2	6.4	11.9	9.9	

Mexican-American N = 1,047; Anglo-American N = 1,537;
Total N = 2,584

*The "No response" category which includes less than 2% of the sample is omitted.

will do what he says and either forget about it or report the event to their parents. The behaviors represented by the two categories of response are more acceptable to the younger children than to the older, and there is a general decline in percentages at successively higher grades. However, even the younger children feel that an unjust command must at least be reported; they will not forget the event but will tell their parents about it. Twenty-two percent of all children will take a more questioning attitude toward the policeman's authority and would ask him to give a reason for his request. Large increments in percentages occur at the seventh and eighth grades where 32%

FIGURE 125

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
JUDGES ARE FAIR,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

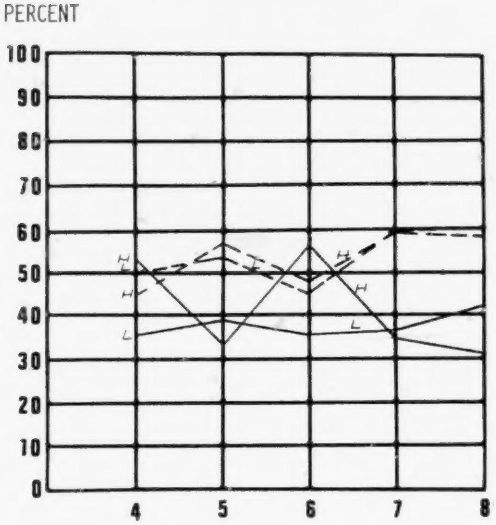


FIGURE 126

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
JUDGES ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
HIGH

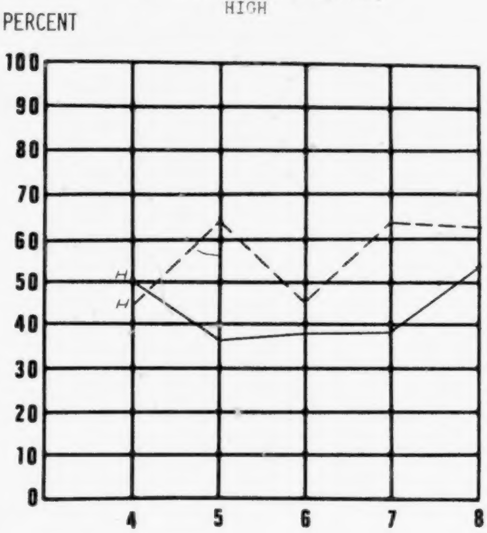


FIGURE 127

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
JUDGES ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
AVERAGE

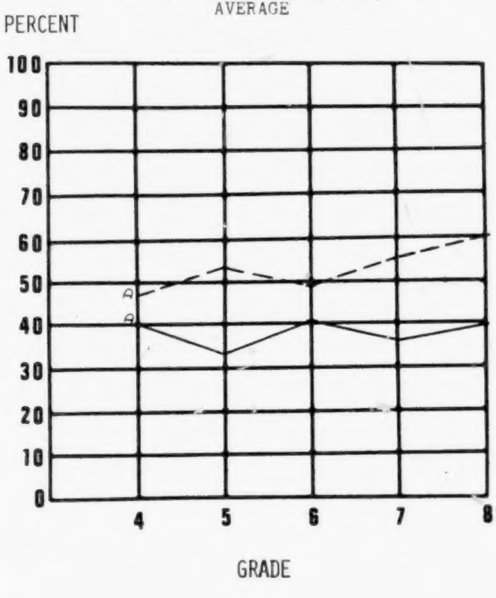


FIGURE 128

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
JUDGES ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
LOW

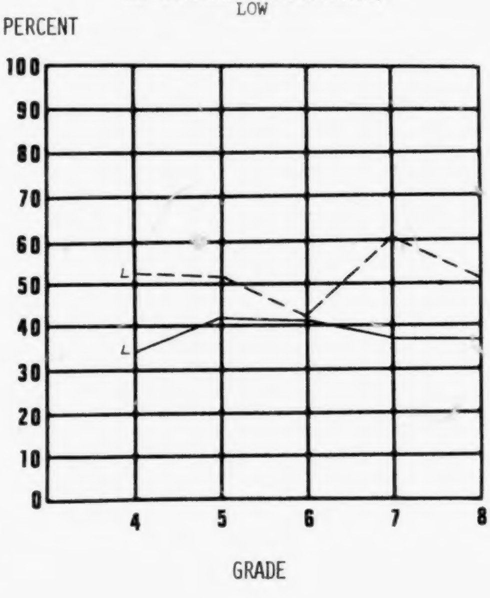


FIGURE 129

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF JUDGES ARE FAIR

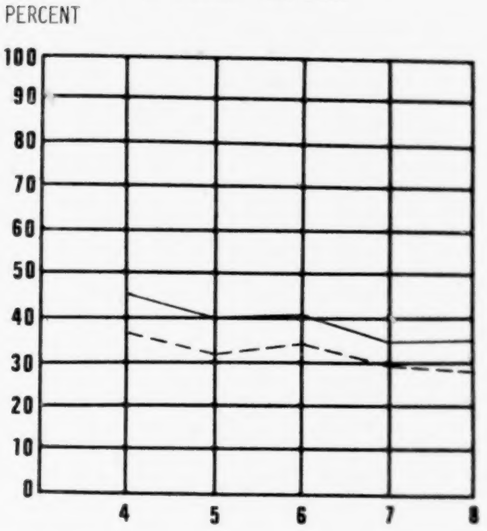


FIGURE 130

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT ALL LAWS ARE FAIR

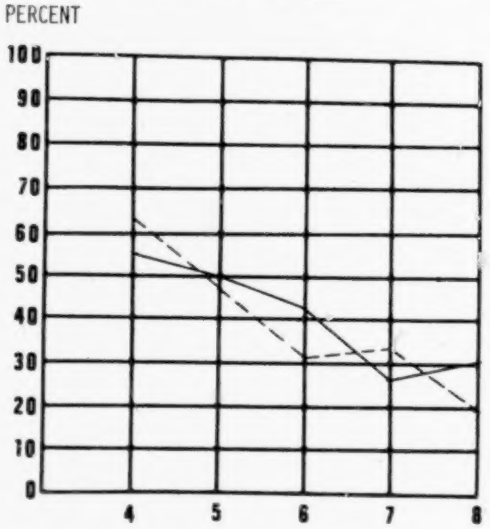


FIGURE 131

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT ALL LAWS ARE FAIR, BY SEX OF CHILD

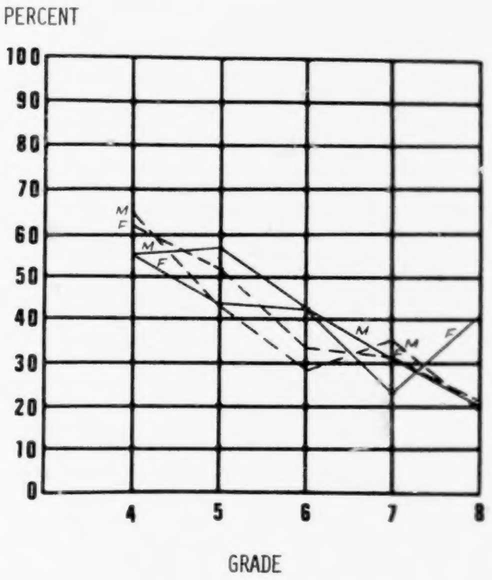
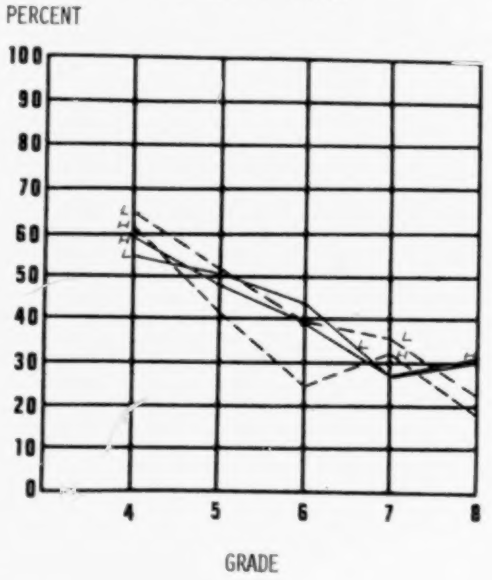


FIGURE 132

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT ALL LAWS ARE FAIR, BY SOCIAL STATUS



of the Anglo-Americans indicate that they would challenge him to give a reason. In the eighth grade, 31% of the Mexican-Americans would expect one.

The evidence indicates that most children are inclined to be obedient to the authority of police whether they are members of one ethnic group or the other. However, insight into the sensitivity of Mexican-American children to demands from the police which they consider to be unjust can be acquired by analyzing the responses to the "I would not do what he told me" alternative. Table 3 indicates that an anticipated defiant reaction to what is considered to be an unjust request from a policeman is greater among Mexican-Americans than among Anglo-Americans, and the percentages increase at successive grade levels.

In addition to questions about one important symbol of authority, the policeman, questionnaire items sampled feelings related to another authority, the judge. Children's feelings about the functions of laws and their fairness were also assessed. There is clear evidence that of the two ethnic groups, the Mexican-Americans are the more cynical about judges. At all grade levels smaller percentages of Mexican-American than Anglo-American children perceive the judge as one who treats people fairly (Figure 123). In addition, the percentages for the latter group increase slightly throughout the grades, while they remain relatively constant for the former. Further, more Anglo-Americans of both sexes indicate confidence in the fairness of judges than do Mexican-Americans, and this pattern of ethnic group response is repeated when data are classified by social status and academic performance (Figures 124, 125, 126, 127, 128). There is no doubt that expectation of equitable treatment from judges is related to ethnicity, and smaller percentages of Mexican-American than Anglo-American children have confidence in their fairness.

Higher percentages of Mexican-American than Anglo-American children are in doubt about whether judges are fair or unfair. Since there is only a slight decline in percentages reported throughout the grades by the Mexican-Americans, one can assume that few increase in attitude acquisition (Figure 129). Table 2 shows that this is indeed the case, since the percentages of "No" responses also remain relatively constant. In general, when the "don't know" responses are classified further by sex of child, social status and level of academic performance, the Mexican-American group exhibits less attitude development than does the Anglo-American.[17]

While Mexican-American children appear to be more cynical about judges and the police than are the Anglo-American, they are not more pessimistic about the law. In reacting to the statement, "All laws are fair," the percentages of "Yes" responses reported by each ethnic group are very much alike

(Figure 130). No substantial differences appear when their responses are further analyzed by sex of child, social status, or level of academic performance (Figures 131, 132, 133, 134, 135). It is clear that the youngest children in the sample have a relatively high regard for the fairness of law, but there is a sharp decline in confidence at successively higher grade levels (Figure 130). Since the "don't know" responses for each ethnic group remains relatively constant throughout the grades, it can be assumed that as children get older they become more and more convinced that some laws are not fair (Figure 136).[18] The frequencies given in Table 2 reveal that the percentage increases in feelings of cynicism concerning the fairness of some laws are even greater among the Anglo-American children than among the Mexican-American.

It is surprising to observe that few children conceive of law as the means through which society governs itself, and there is little growth toward attainment of this concept during the span of years from grades four through eight (Figure 137). Instead, the children of each ethnic group believe that the most important function of law is to protect them, and this feeling of benevolence increases slightly at successively higher grade levels (Figure 138). However, greater percentages of Anglo-Americans than Mexican-Americans conceive of law as protection and, indeed, higher percentages of children of the latter group view the function of law primarily as preventing bad behavior (Figure 139).

How children perceive the function of law is associated less with the sex of the child than with ethnicity. Compared to Mexican-Americans, greater percentages of the Anglo-Americans of either sex view the law as protective (Figure 140). However, there also appears to be an interaction between ethnicity and sex. The percentages of Mexican-American males who perceive law as protective are generally lower than the frequencies reported by the females. In comparison with Anglo-Americans, higher percentages of Mexican-Americans of both sexes view the purpose of law as the prevention of bad behavior (Figure 141).

Perception of the protective function of the law appears to be related more to ethnicity than to social status. In general, Anglo-Americans of both upper and lower status report higher percentages than do the Mexican-Americans of both status groups (Figure 142). A comparison of the percentages reported by Mexican-Americans of lower status with those of the Anglo-Americans of upper status is particularly revealing. The higher frequencies which are reported by the Anglo-Americans of upper status express their greater belief in the benevolence of law, while the lower percentages reported by the Mexican-Americans indicate that they have less confidence in its protectiveness. In direct contrast, Mexican-American children of lower social status report with the highest percentages the view that the

FIGURE 133

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
ALL LAWS ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
HIGH

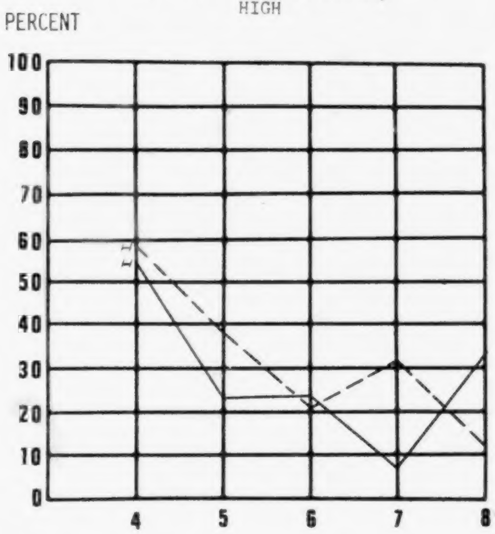


FIGURE 134

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
ALL LAWS ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
AVERAGE

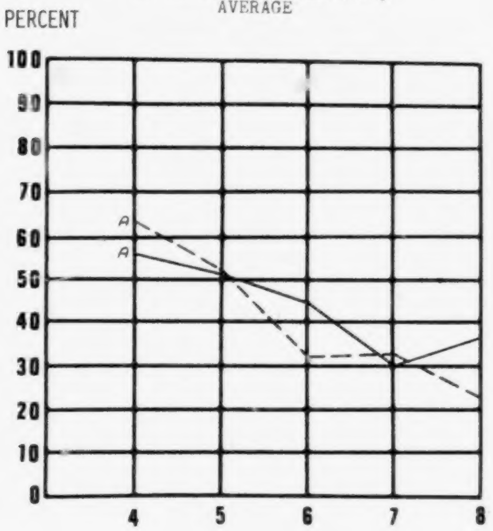


FIGURE 135

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
ALL LAWS ARE FAIR,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE,
LOW

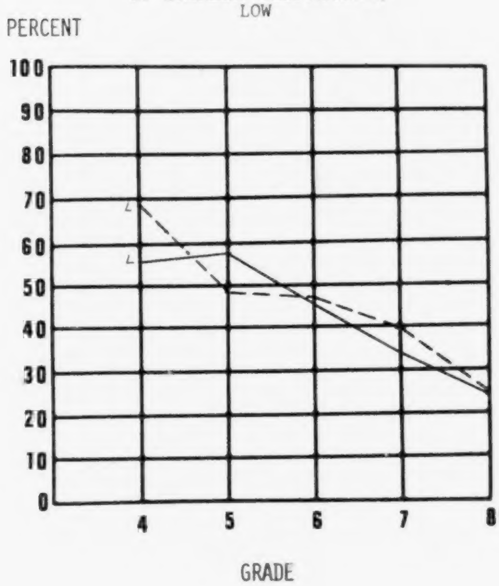


FIGURE 136

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY "DON'T KNOW"
IF ALL LAWS ARE FAIR

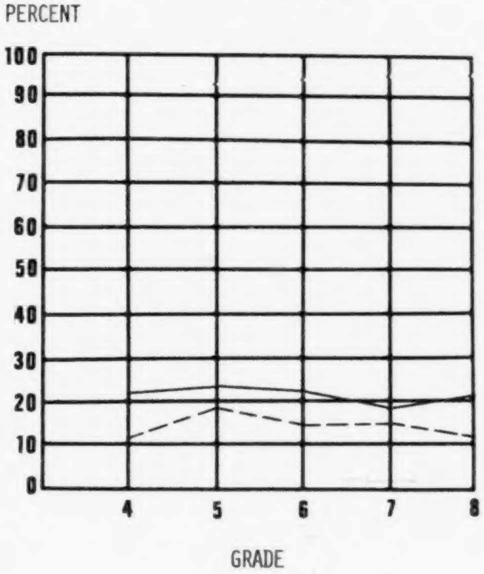


FIGURE 137

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO HELP RUN THE COUNTRY

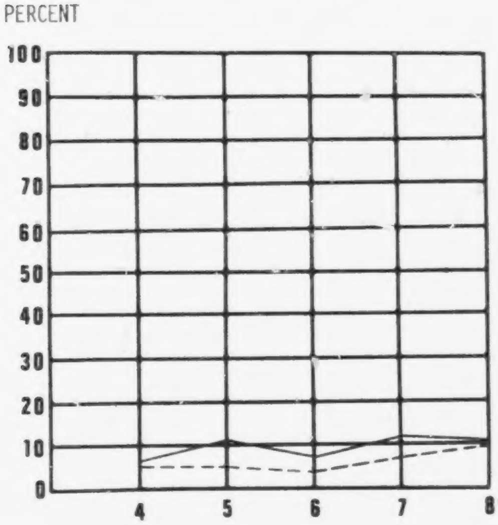


FIGURE 138

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PROTECT PEOPLE

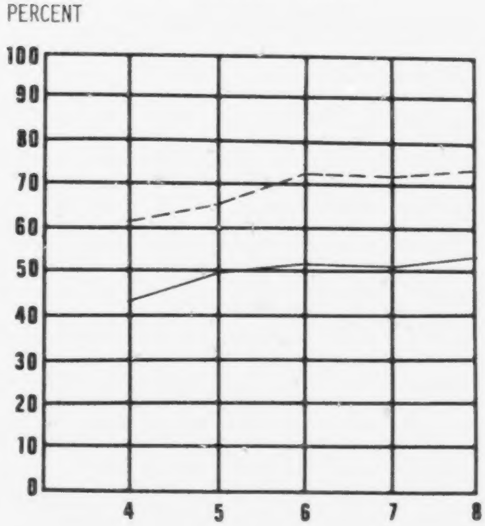


FIGURE 139

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PREVENT BAD BEHAVIOR

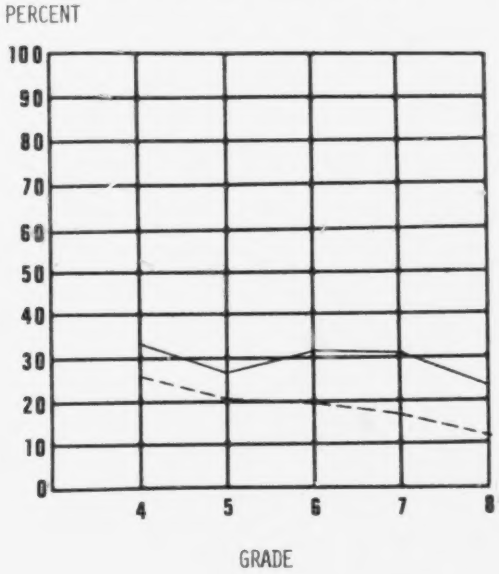


FIGURE 140

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PROTECT PEOPLE, BY SEX OF CHILD

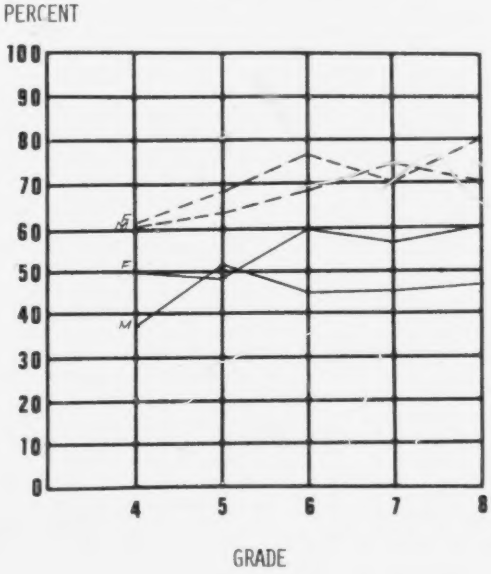


FIGURE 141

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PREVENT BAD BEHAVIOR, BY SEX OF CHILD

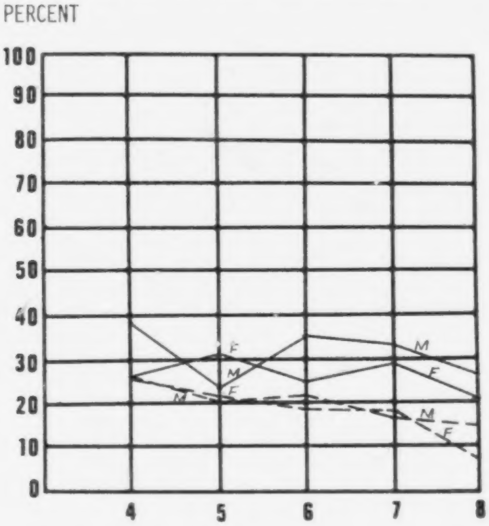


FIGURE 142

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PROTECT PEOPLE, BY SOCIAL STATUS

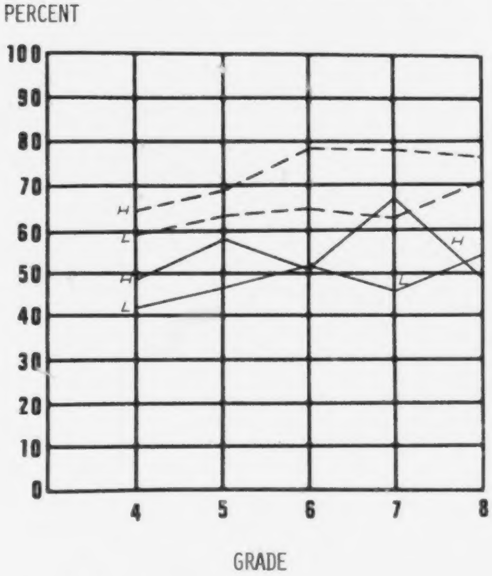


FIGURE 143

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PREVENT BAD BEHAVIOR, BY SOCIAL STATUS

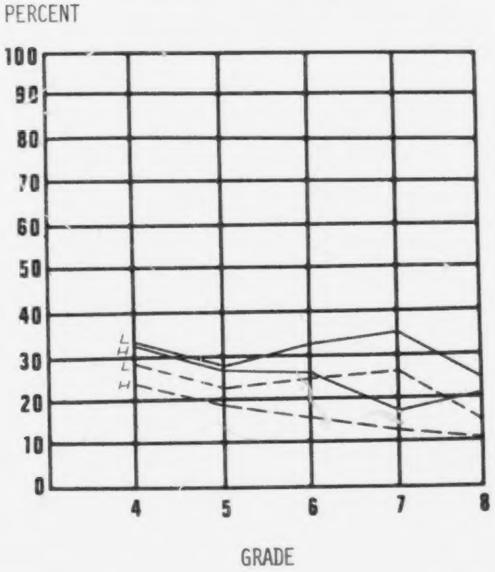


FIGURE 144

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PROTECT PEOPLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

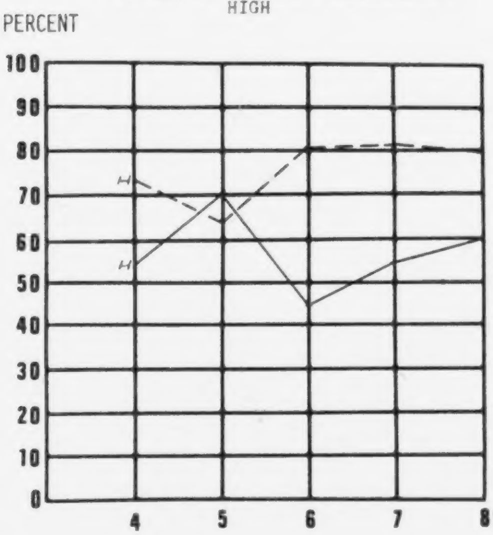


FIGURE 145

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PROTECT PEOPLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

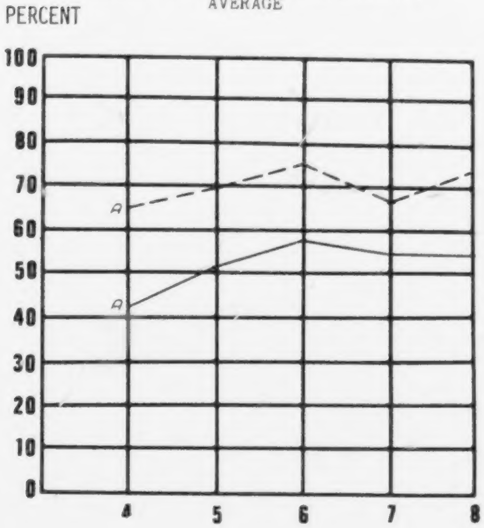


FIGURE 146

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PROTECT PEOPLE, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

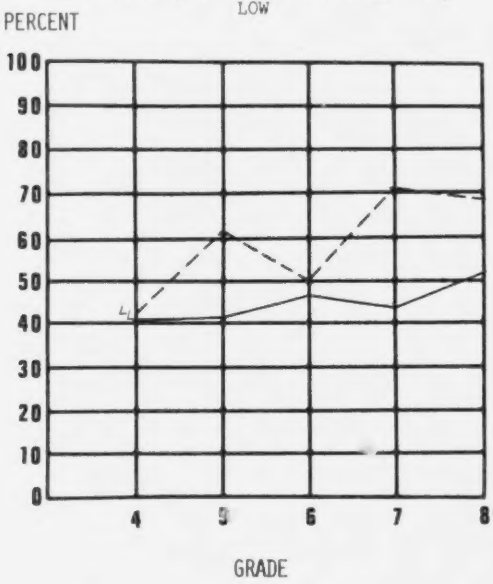


FIGURE 147

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PREVENT BAD BEHAVIOR, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

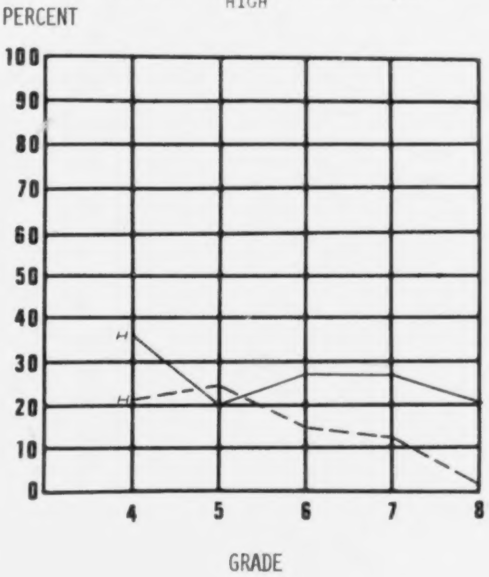


FIGURE 148

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PREVENT BAD BEHAVIOR, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AVERAGE

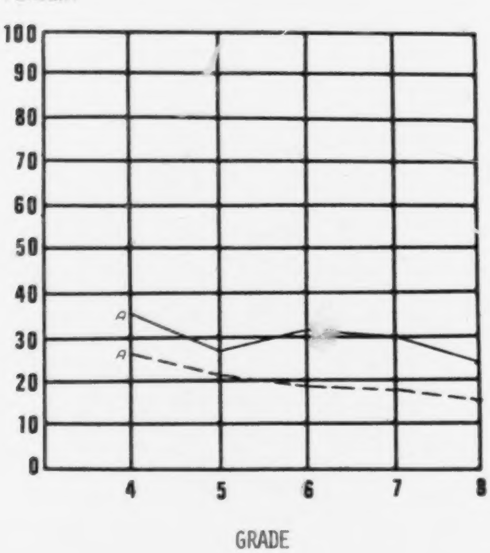
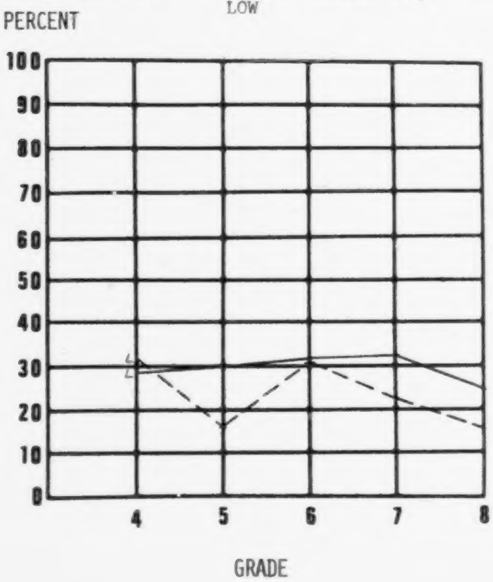


FIGURE 149

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THE FUNCTION OF LAW IS TO PREVENT BAD BEHAVIOR, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW



function of law is to prevent bad behavior, while the Anglo-Americans of upper status report the lowest (Figure 143). Within each ability group a similar pattern emerges: greater percentages of Anglo-Americans than Mexican-Americans view the function of law as protective, while in general, higher percentages of the latter group perceive the function of law as preventing bad behavior (Figures 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149).

Section Summary

In studying children's affective orientations toward political objects within the compliance system, differences between ethnic groups emerge. Anglo-Americans view the role of the police principally as providing protection for their safety, and this is particularly evident among the girls as they get older. There is no growth in such feeling among the Mexican-Americans, who instead perceive the police primarily as law enforcers. In spite of the attention that is given to the policeman as a "community helper" in the early grades of the elementary school, the youngest children of both upper and lower social status perceive policemen less as helpers and more as law enforcers. On the other hand, children have confidence in obtaining help from an individual policeman in response to a particular need, but among Mexican-Americans this confidence decreases with age--particularly among the males.

When children of the two ethnic groups are compared, Mexican-Americans appear less ready to anticipate fair treatment from the police. This conviction becomes more firm among the older age groups. Nevertheless, this feeling toward police does not lead to rebelliousness. Almost 90% of the children will obey a policeman's request even if they consider it to be unjust. Of the few children whose sensitivity to an unjust police command is so great as to generate defiance, the majority are males, and there are slightly higher percentages of Mexican-Americans in this group.

Not only do greater percentages of Mexican-American than Anglo-American children anticipate unfair treatment from police, but in addition, they express feelings of cynicism about being treated fairly by judges with greater frequency. The percentage levels remain relatively constant throughout the grades. Since the rate of attitude acquisition also remains constant, it can be assumed that the several agencies of socialization are not having much impact on the development of positive attitudes toward the two symbols of authority. Among children who believe that the law is fair, there is no difference between ethnic groups. However, as the children get older they become more and more convinced that some laws are not fair, but in this instance greater percentages of Anglo-Americans develop feelings of pessimism than do Mexican-Americans. Although the

Mexican-American children can readily perceive unfairness in the behavior of persons such as policemen or judges, they may not be as aware that the law itself could be unfair rather than, or as well as, the persons who administer it.

It would appear that if instruction in government is being given to children during the first eight grades of school, there is little growth toward the concept of law as a means through which society governs itself. Instead, the child sees law either as providing protection, on the one hand, or preventing bad behavior on the other. With regard to ethnic differences, fewer Mexican-Americans regard the law as protective while more view its function as the prevention of bad behavior.

Notes

1. David Easton and Jack Dennis, op. cit., p. 81.
2. Fred Greenstein, op. cit., p. 102.
3. Robert Hess and Judith Torney, op. cit., p. 171.
4. Easton and Dennis, op. cit., p. 346.
5. Dean Jaros et al., "The Malevolent Leader: Political Socialization in an American Subculture," American Political Science Review, LXII, No. 2 (June 1968), p. 575.
6. Data in the two positive categories were subsequently combined to attempt to give a clear picture of positive affect, and the two negative categories were also consolidated in a similar manner. The result is a three point scale. This expedient was also utilized in organizing the data generated by other items of the questionnaire.
7. There appear to be no clearly defined differences between the sexes in their expectations of getting help from the President, governor and mayor; therefore, no graphs are presented.
8. Since social status differences are slight or not clearly defined, no additional graphs are presented besides Figure 62.
9. Because the data are inconclusive, the graphs for the average and low ability groups are not presented.
10. Because the data are inconclusive, the graphs for the average and low ability groups are not presented.
11. The curves for the high ability group often tend to fluctuate considerably. Their instability is probably related to sampling irregularities associated with the small number of Mexican-American children of high ability who are included in the sample: the total among all grade levels is 125.
12. With respect to evaluations of the governor and the mayor, differences between the ethnic groups are slight or inconclusive when data are further classified by sex, social status and level of ability; therefore, no graphs are presented.

13. Except for the differences between the sexes concerning evaluation of the governor's performance, there do not appear to be differences between the two ethnic groups in their rate of attitude acquisition toward the governor and mayor when data are further classified by sex, social status and level of ability; therefore, no graphs are presented.

14. Greenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

15 Part of this table is derived from p. 101 of Fred Greenstein's study. Since he did not differentiate children by both social status and ethnic group, the two samples are not exactly comparable. For purposes of the Californiaa study, the "Anglo-American" group is defined loosely as including all children whose ancestry is not Mexican-American, Black, Oriental, or American Indian.

16. Since these data confirm the trend that is already depicted in Figure 117, no additional graphs are presented.

17. Since these data confirm the trend that is already depicted in Figure 129, no additional graphs are presented.

18. Since differences between the two ethnic groups are relatively small and inconclusive when data are classified by sex, social status and academic performance, graphs are not presented.

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS OF ORIENTATIONS TOWARD THE CITIZENSHIP ROLE

The Role of Participant

In the participant political culture the individual must not only fulfill the subject role, but he is also expected to exercise influence on the decision-making process. In order to affect decisions he must know how the system is supposed to work in its ideal form and how it actually functions in practice, but in addition he must also learn how to participate effectively. Participating effectively within the system requires that the individual understand important regime norms and integrate them into a pattern of political behavior. It is necessary then to discuss the concept of regime norms first.

The regime is described by David Easton as a set of arrangements or rules of the game which help the system to function.[1] They define the ways in which demands are introduced into the system, how they are processed, how they are effectuated, and how differences are resolved. The term is not restricted to written law or a Constitution, but includes unwritten expectations as well. Easton partitions the concept of regime into three sets of components: values and principles, norms, and the structure of authority.

In this study, Chapter III was devoted principally to the analysis of attitudes toward the structure of authority. This chapter is concerned with selected regime norms. For example, people should be actively involved in politics; they should try to understand public issues, take a stand on them, and vote.[2] A citizen should try to influence government, and he may work through political parties and interest groups to accomplish this end. However, if his candidate loses an election or if he is unsuccessful in attaining a goal, he must either support the winner or work within the system to promote change.

The analysis in this chapter will follow the same general pattern as those which have already been presented. The feelings which Mexican-American and Anglo-American children express toward regime norms will be examined to discern differences between the two ethnic groups in their degree of partisan commitment, involvement in politics, and estimates of political efficacy. Their attitude toward supporting the winner of an election whose candidacy they opposed will provide insight into the extent to which the concept of legitimacy is internalized. In the first section, analyses will be made of children's partisan commitment, political involvement, and concept of legitimacy. Then will follow an analysis of their responses relating to feelings of efficacy.

FIGURE 150

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE

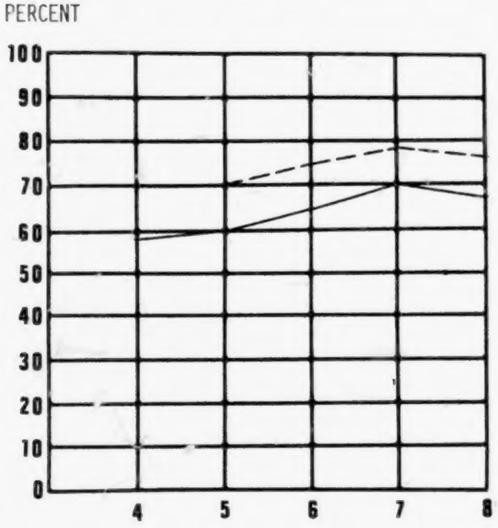


FIGURE 151

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE, BY SEX OF CHILD

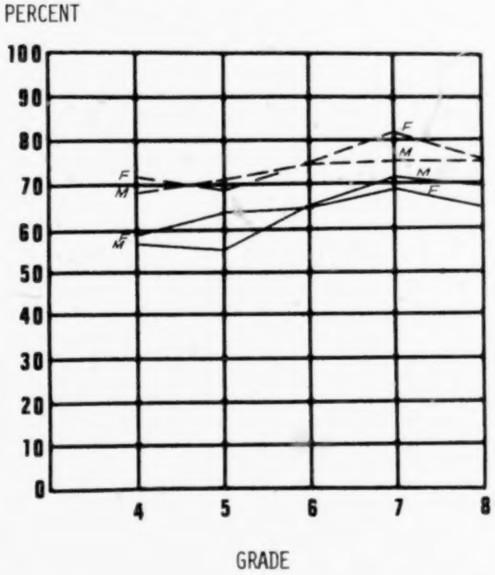
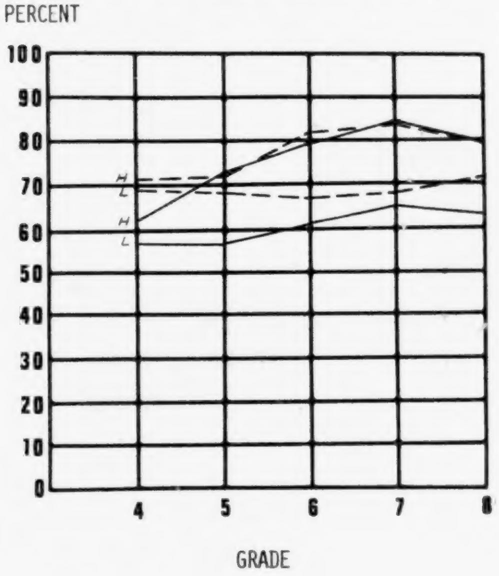


FIGURE 152

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE, BY SOCIAL STATUS



KEY TO FIGURES

——	MEXICAN-AMERICAN
- - -	ANGLO-AMERICAN
M	MALE
F	FEMALE
H	HIGH
A	AVERAGE
L	LOW

FIGURE 153

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

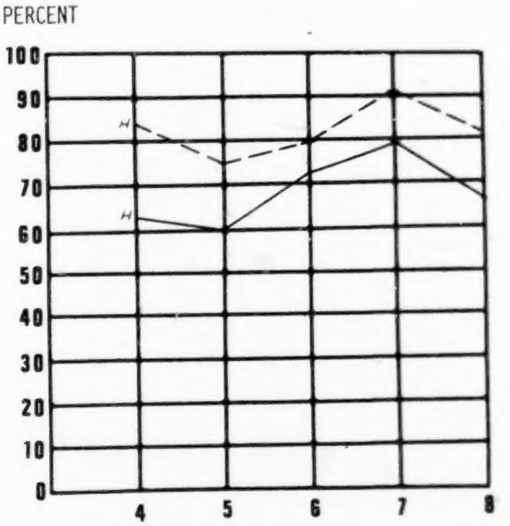


FIGURE 154

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

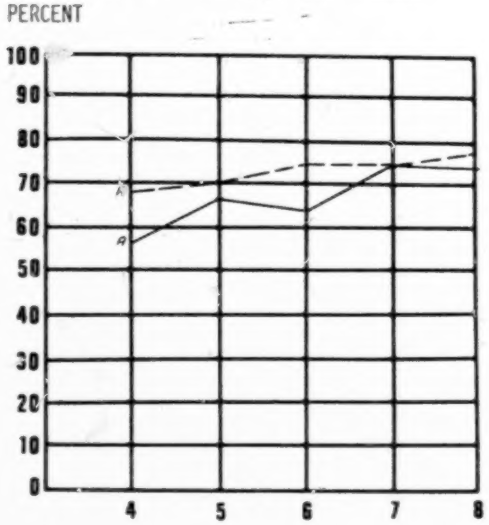


FIGURE 155

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

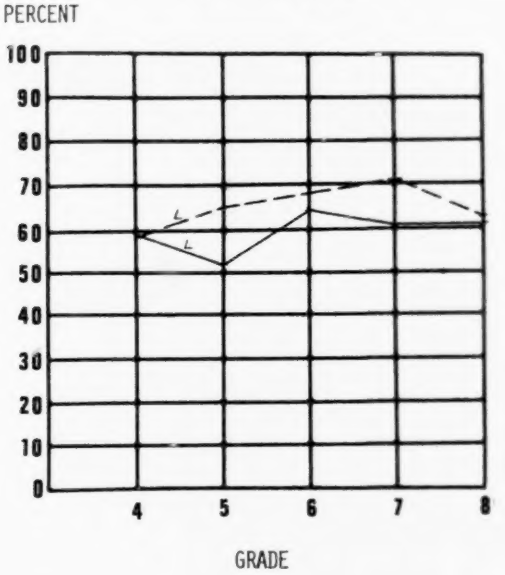
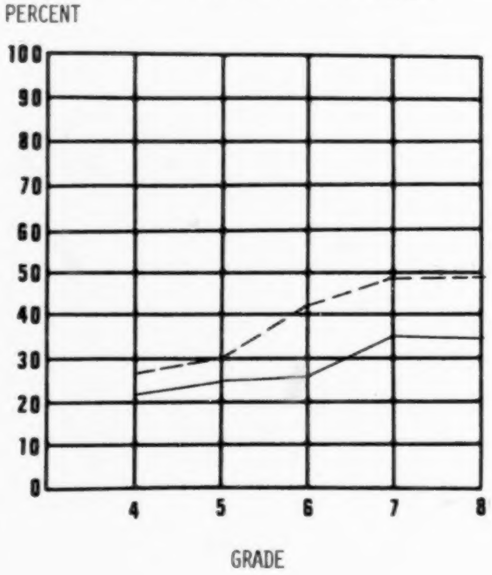


FIGURE 156

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
PARTISAN COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT



Potential Political Involvement

From the time the child is very young he is exposed to the idea that voting is an instrument for making decisions about policy, procedures, or leadership. Within the school setting, in the family, or in a community youth group, he may even have an opportunity to cast a vote. Such participation is anticipatory of later involvement in adult decision-making roles--particularly in the choice of leaders. To find out if children are developing the inclination to put to use one of the important means of influencing government, they were asked if they planned to vote when they reached maturity. The responses to this question are given in Figure 150.

It can be observed that by the fourth grade a large number of children within each ethnic group are aware that voting is an important adult political behavior. The 50% index of significant awareness is achieved by children at every grade level. While differences are not large, at all grades the percentages of Anglo-Americans who plan to vote are greater than are those reported by Mexican-Americans, and the pattern of ethnic response is similar when the data are also analyzed by sex of child (Figure 151).

Figure 152 indicates that there are differences in the frequencies reported by the two status groups; evidently social class membership influences intentions to vote. The children of high status within each ethnic group are very much alike; but at all grade levels Mexican-American children of lower social status report smaller frequencies than do the Anglo-American. Within each of the three ability levels, Anglo-Americans report intentions to vote with greater frequency than do the Mexican-Americans, and it is surprising to observe that differences are greatest between children of the two ethnic groups who are in the high academic performance category (Figures 153, 154, 155).

Besides information about intentions to vote, other evidence of involvement was acquired by asking children to indicate their feelings about whether or not they should commit themselves to a political party. The nature of their commitment was assessed at two levels of difficulty. First, children were asked to indicate their choice of party from several alternatives listed on the questionnaire. But this relatively simple task could be performed without any greater knowledge about a political party than having heard it mentioned. Therefore, on a more difficult level, an assessment of information about political parties was made by asking children to write the names of prominent members and describe differences between the Democratic and Republican parties. This question also provided information about whether or not children tend to be candidate or issue oriented.

The first part of the discussion which follows is concerned with an examination of the amount of partisan commitment among children and whether or not they know the meaning of political party. This will be followed by an assessment of the degree to which children are aware of their parents' party preferences and the extent of their loyalty to the parents' party affiliations. Figure 156 depicts growth in children's perception of the importance of partisan commitment. At all grade levels percentages that are reported by Anglo-Americans are greater than are those reported by Mexican-Americans, and although frequencies are relatively similar at the fourth grade, they become more disparate at successively higher grade levels. In general, differences appear to be related more to ethnicity than to sex or social status, and Anglo-American children of upper social status report with greatest frequency belief in the importance of partisan commitment (Figures 157, 158). This is also generally true for those Anglo-Americans who are within the high ability category (Figure 159).

The questionnaire item which requested children to check whether or not it is important to support a political party included two additional options: "don't know" and "don't know what political party means." The percentages reported by children who do not know whether or not they should support a political party remain remarkably stable throughout the grades, and differences between the two groups are very slight (Figure 160). However, the responses to the other alternative do reveal differences between the two ethnic groups. Mexican-Americans report more frequently than do Anglo-Americans lack of knowledge about the meaning of political party (Figure 161). The younger children of each ethnic group report frequencies which are relatively similar in the fourth grade, but thereafter differences in the percentages that are reported become more distinct at successive grade levels, and the sharpest decline in frequency of response to this alternative occurs among the Anglo-Americans. At the eighth grade, over 20% of the Mexican-Americans do not know the meaning of political party.

Lack of knowledge about the meaning of political party appears to be greater among Mexican-American girls than boys. The Anglo-American girls also report higher frequencies of such responses than do the males (Figure 162). However, the rate of decline of frequencies in this response category is very gentle among Mexican-American girls; the percentages do not drop significantly before grade eight. Ethnicity rather than social class seems to account for differences among children, and this is particularly evident at the higher grade levels. Mexican-Americans of both status groups report responses to this alternative with greater frequency than do Anglo-Americans (Figure 163). The same pattern of relationships between ethnic groups appears within each category of academic performance (Figure 164).

FIGURE 157

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
PARTISAN COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT,
BY SEX OF CHILD

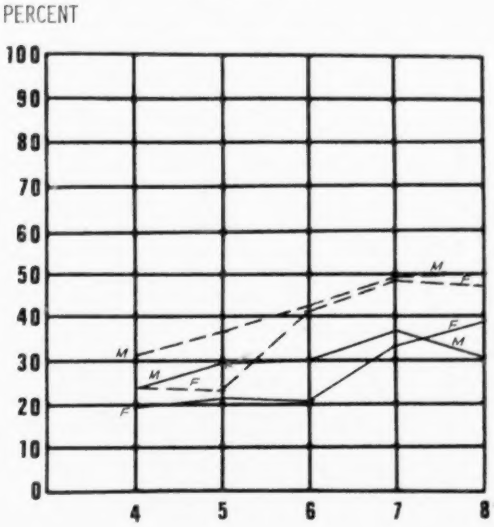


FIGURE 158

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
PARTISAN COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT
BY SOCIAL STATUS

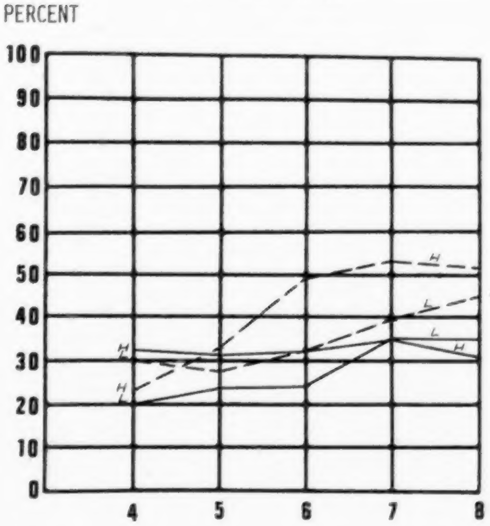


FIGURE 159

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
PARTISAN COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

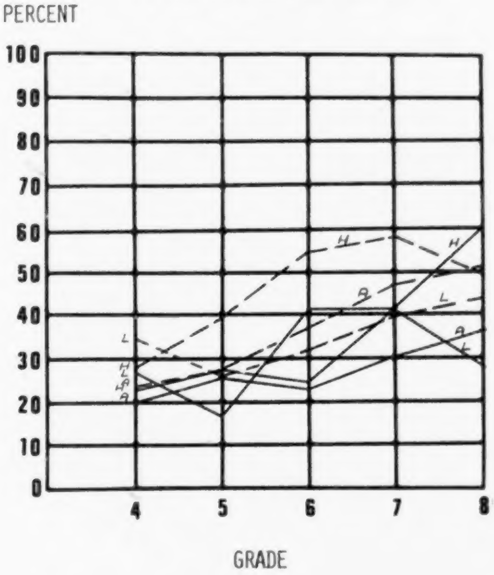


FIGURE 160

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY DON'T KNOW
IF PARTISAN COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT

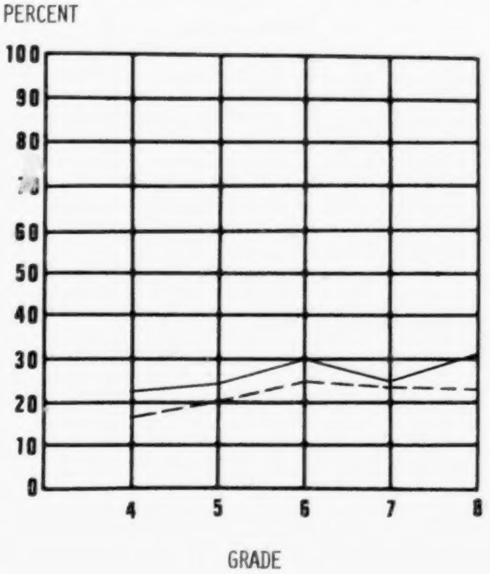


FIGURE 161

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF POLITICAL PARTY

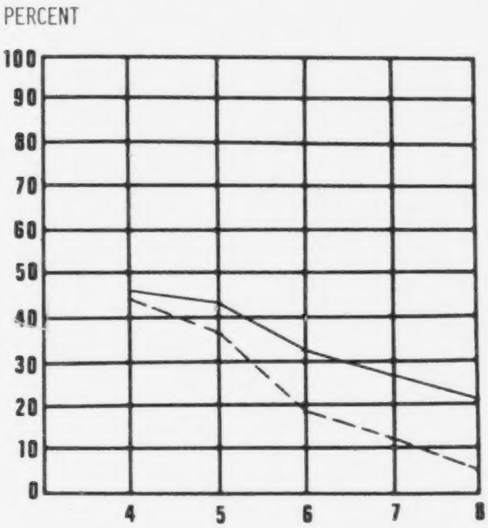


FIGURE 162

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF POLITICAL PARTY, BY SEX OF CHILD

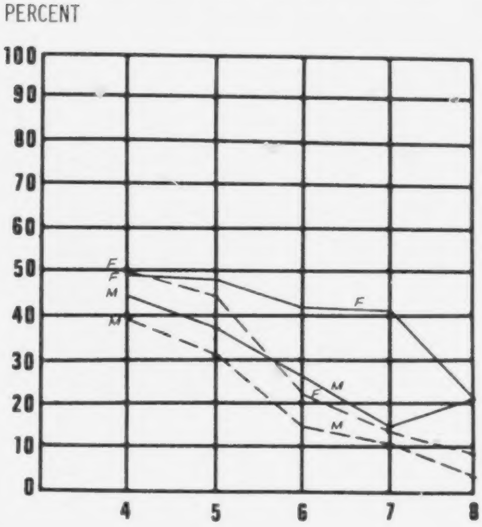


FIGURE 163

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF POLITICAL PARTY, BY SOCIAL STATUS

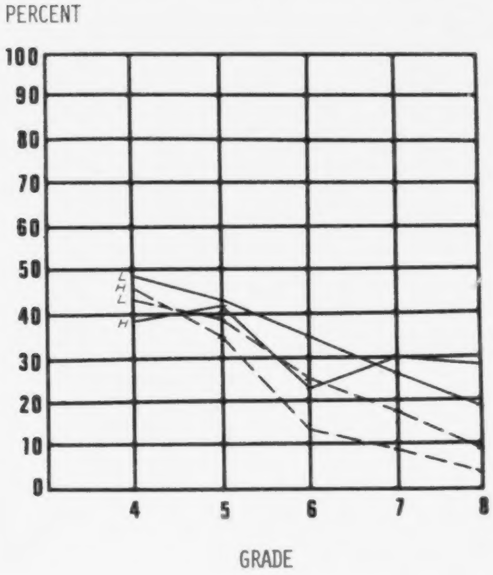


FIGURE 164

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF POLITICAL PARTY, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

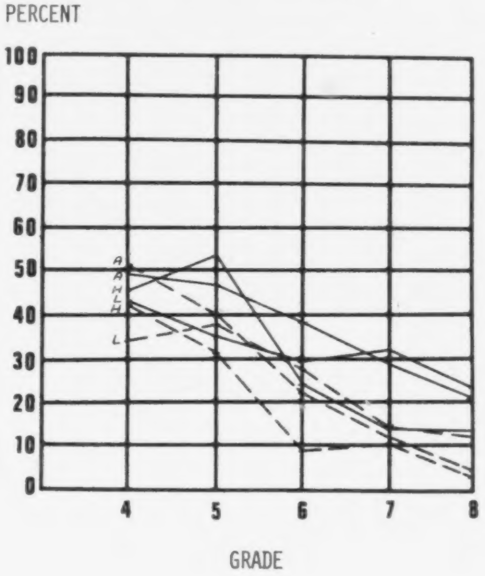


FIGURE 165

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY KNOW
THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF ONE PARENT

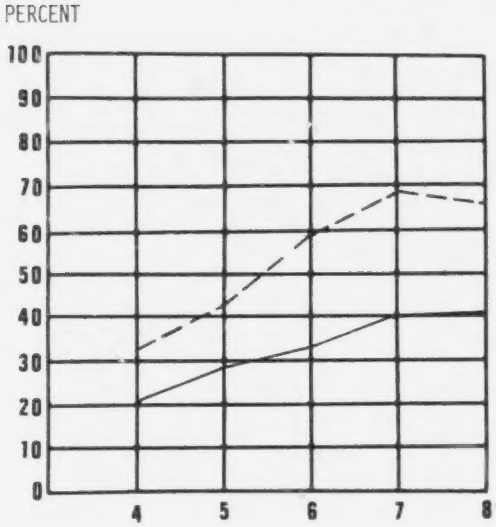


FIGURE 166

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY KNOW
THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF ONE PARENT,
BY SEX OF CHILD

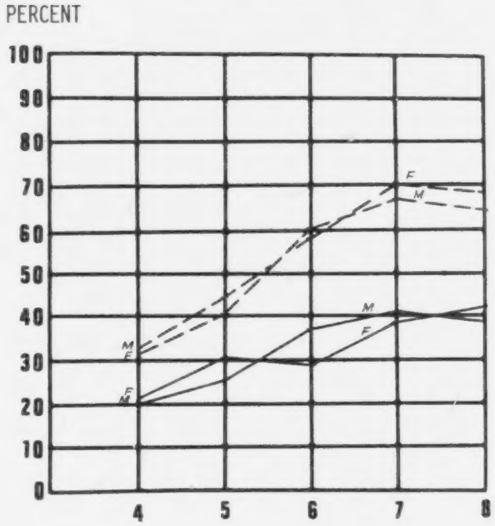


FIGURE 167

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY KNOW
THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF ONE PARENT,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

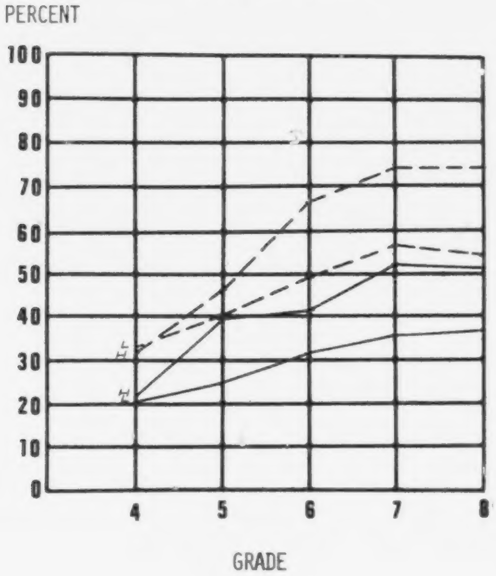


FIGURE 168

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY KNOW
THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF ONE PARENT,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

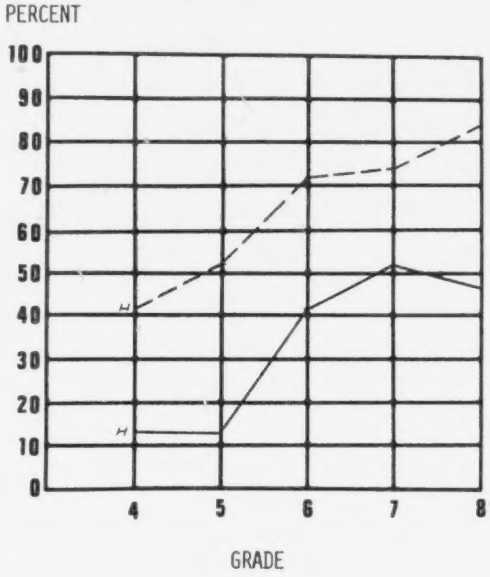


FIGURE 169

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY KNOW THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF ONE PARENT, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

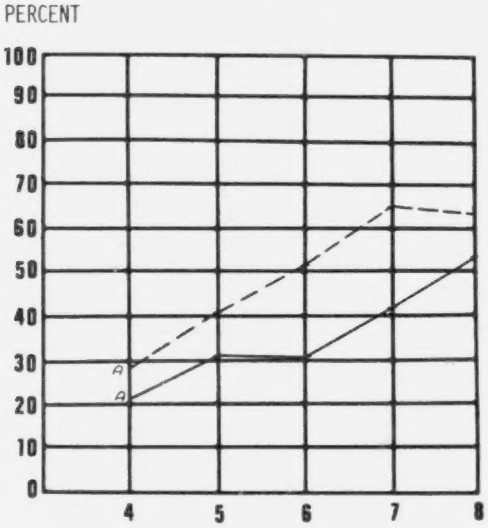


FIGURE 170

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY KNOW THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF ONE PARENT, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

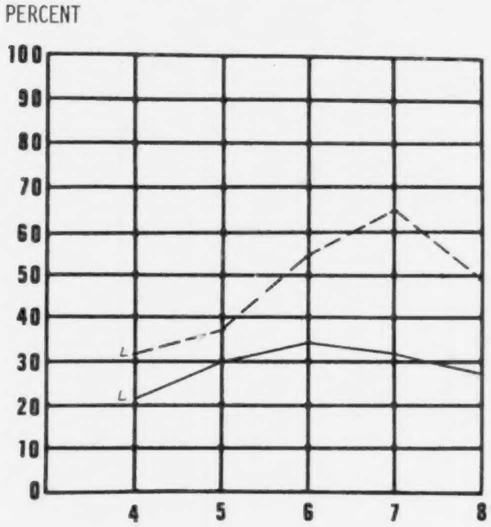


FIGURE 171

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF PARENTS

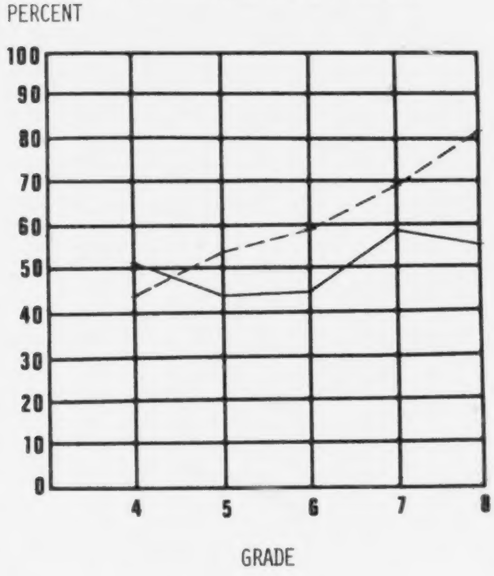


FIGURE 172

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF PARENTS, BY SEX OF CHILD

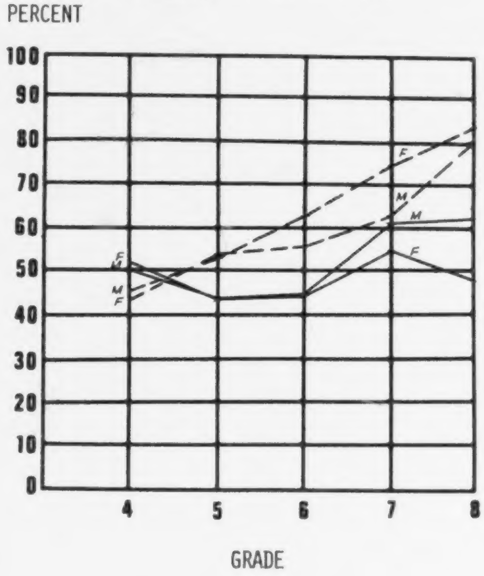


FIGURE 173

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF PARENTS, BY SOCIAL STATUS

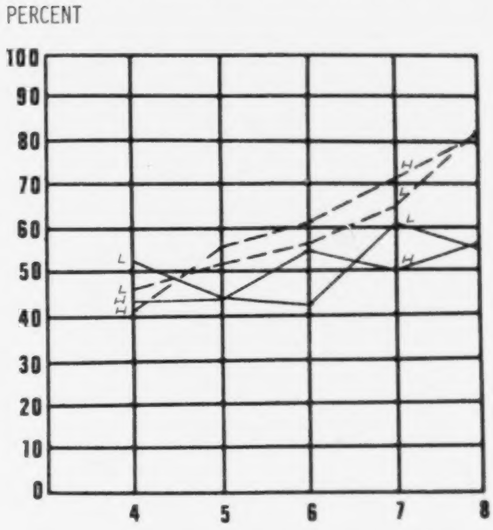


FIGURE 174

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF PARENTS, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, HIGH

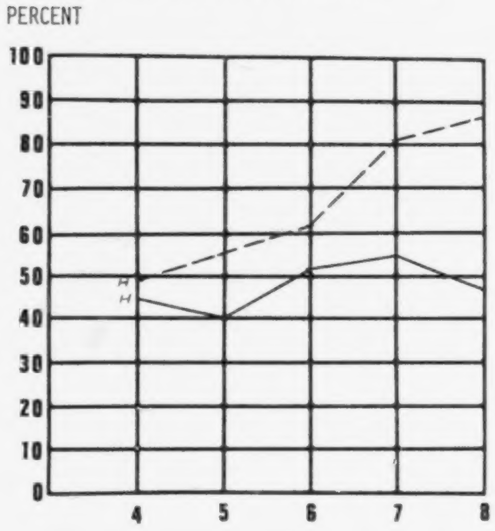


FIGURE 175

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF PARENTS, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AVERAGE

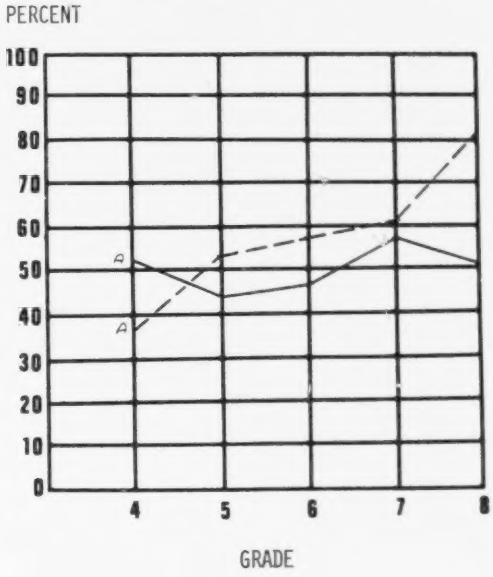


FIGURE 176

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE PARTY AFFILIATION OF PARENTS, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, LOW

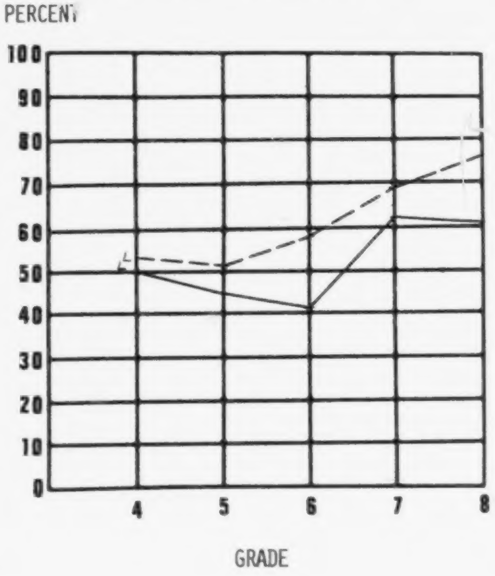


FIGURE 177

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" FOR WHICH PARTY THEY WILL VOTE

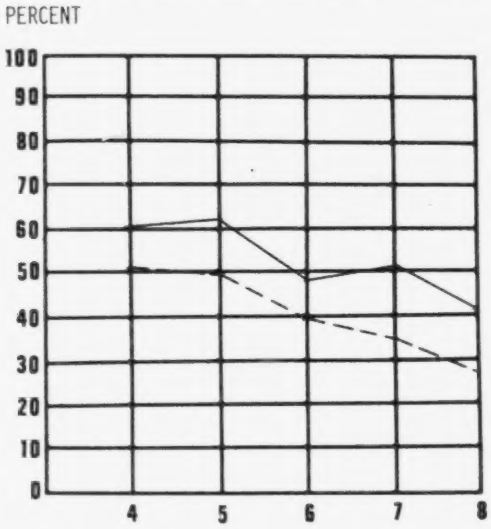


FIGURE 178

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" FOR WHICH PARTY THEY WILL VOTE, BY SEX OF CHILD

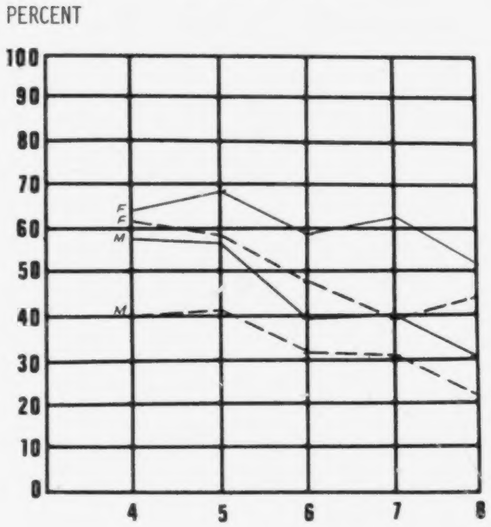


FIGURE 179

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" FOR WHICH PARTY THEY WILL VOTE, BY SOCIAL STATUS

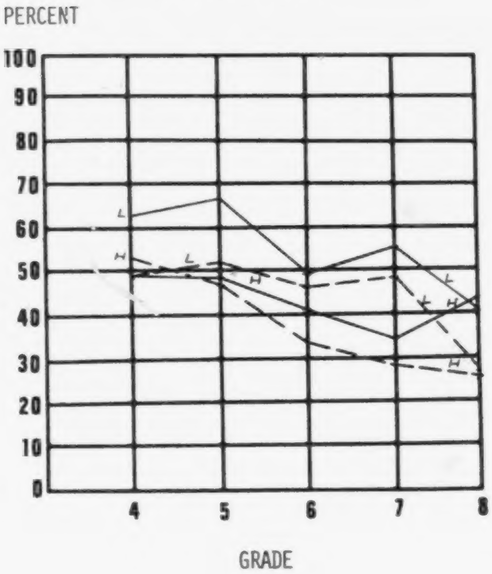
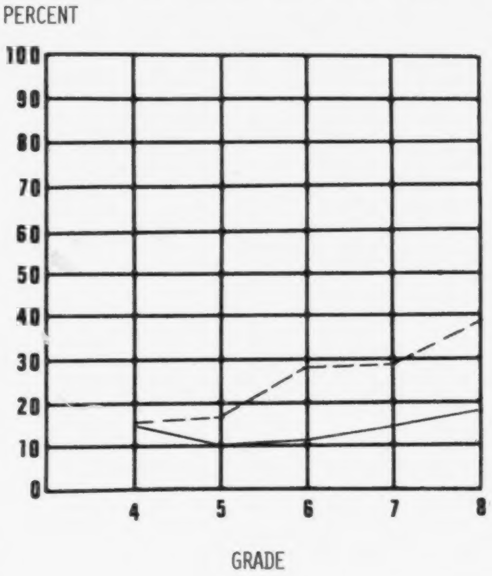


FIGURE 180

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY WILL VOTE INDEPENDENT OF PARTY



Since the family has considerable influence on the child's party identification, another channel for exploring commitment is through children's awareness of their parents' party affiliation. Children's feelings about deciding to belong to the same party as their parents can also be assessed. Figure 165 indicates that the Anglo-American children report awareness of parents' party affiliations with greater frequency than do the Mexican-American, and initial differences in the percentages reported by the two groups become greater at successively higher grade levels. The pattern of ethnic group response remains relatively consistent when the data are also analyzed by sex of child, social status, and level of academic performance (Figures 166, 167, 168, 169, 170).

The Anglo-Americans report more frequently than do the Mexican-Americans that young people should not decide to adopt their parents' party affiliation (Figure 171). This pattern of ethnic group response repeats itself when attention is also given to differences reported by sex of child, social status, and level of academic performance (Figures 172, 173, 174, 175, 176). Not only are Anglo-Americans more frequently willing to reject their parents' party affiliation, but this attitude increases with age. Among the Mexican-Americans this growth pattern is not evident.

In the first part of this section children's attitudes toward partisan commitment were examined. Next, analyses will be made of children's uncertainty about party preference and their knowledge of party leaders. On one item of the questionnaire, children were requested to indicate which one of the several parties they would vote for when they reach maturity.[3] Two response alternatives are of special interest in this study: "sometimes one, sometimes another," and "don't know."

The extent to which children are not developing either a party preference or an attitude toward independence in voting can be gauged by the percentage of "don't know" responses. This one category received almost half of the total responses to the question. At all grade levels Mexican-Americans report more "don't know" responses than do Anglo-Americans, and for each group there is a general decline in frequencies at successive grade levels (Figure 177). The sex of the child as well as his ethnic group membership also influences choices: within each ethnic group girls report greater frequencies than do the males, and the Mexican-American girls report the slowest rate of decline in percentages (Figure 178). Social class also influences the choices: children of lower social status report higher percentages in this category than do those of upper status (Figure 179). Lack of commitment to either a political party or independence in voting is associated more with children of lower than of upper status and with the girls rather than with the boys.[4]

Figure 180 indicates that the frequencies reported by Anglo-Americans who favor voting as independents increase at a more rapid rate than do those of the Mexican-Americans. The children of each group report similar frequencies when they are very young, but ethnic group differences grow larger at successive grade levels. This pattern of ethnic group response remains relatively constant when data are organized by sex of child, social status, and academic performance (Figures 181, 182, 183). The disparity is greatest between upper status Anglo-Americans and lower status Mexican-Americans. Differences between the Anglo-Americans of high ability and Mexican-Americans of low ability are also striking. There appears to be little doubt that attitudes toward independence in voting are reported more frequently by the Anglo-Americans and they internalize these feelings at a younger age.

The indicators of political involvement that have been discussed above were obtained through questionnaire items which required children to check one of several alternatives. However, children were also presented with the more difficult task of writing the name of political leaders in blank spaces which were provided. Figure 184 indicates that among children of each ethnic group the ability to name leaders of the Democratic Party increases at successively higher grade levels, but the Anglo-Americans are able to accomplish this task with greater frequency. Fourth and fifth grade children report frequencies which are very similar, but the disparity between ethnic groups increases in the upper grades. The sex of the child appears to account for differences among the Mexican-Americans; compared to males, the girls in the sample are less able to respond accurately. On the other hand, the males report frequencies which are close to those of the Anglo-Americans of both sexes[5] (Figure 185).

Since children of each ethnic group who are of upper social status name Democratic Party leaders more frequently than do children of lower status, it can be assumed that social class is an important factor which accounts for differences in ability to identify leaders (Figure 186). At the same time, however, there is convergence in the percentages that are reported at grade eight which suggests that agencies of socialization might be influencing children's learning. When the responses are also grouped according to level of academic performance, the Anglo-American children of high academic performance take the lead at an early age, and the frequencies that they report rise far above those of other children (Figure 187). Only this group approximates and surpasses the 50% index of significant awareness. While growth is also evident among children within the other categories of ability, learning progresses at a much slower rate. The large differences among the three ability categories of Anglo-Americans is of particular interest in contrast to the relative similarity of response among the Mexican-Americans. Academic ability seems to make more of a

FIGURE 181

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE INDEPENDENT OF PARTY,
BY SEX OF CHILD

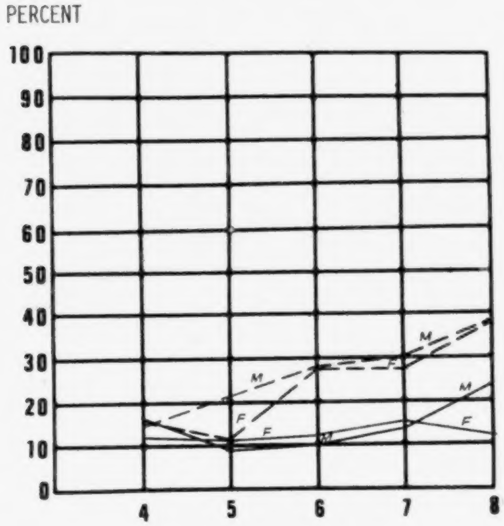


FIGURE 182

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE INDEPENDENT OF PARTY,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

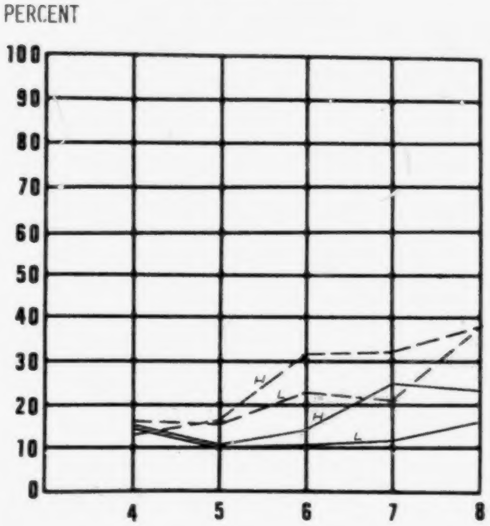


FIGURE 183

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY WILL VOTE INDEPENDENT OF PARTY,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

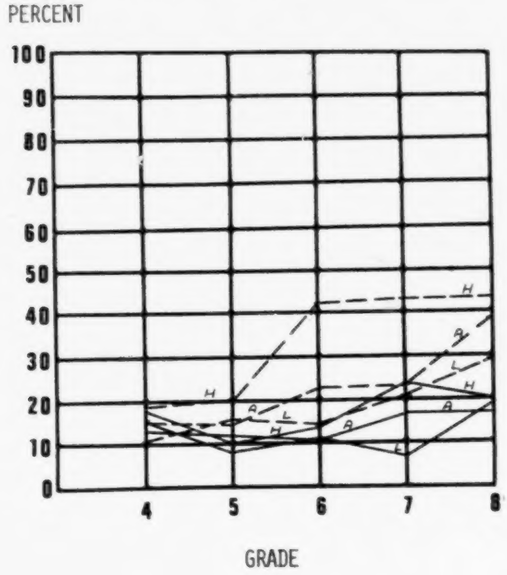


FIGURE 184

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

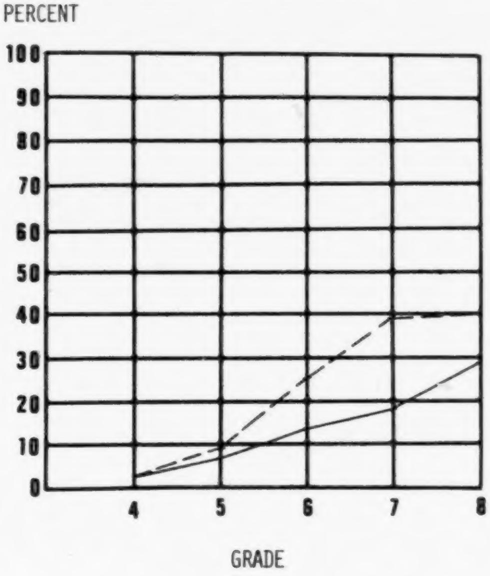


FIGURE 185

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY,
BY SEX OF CHILD

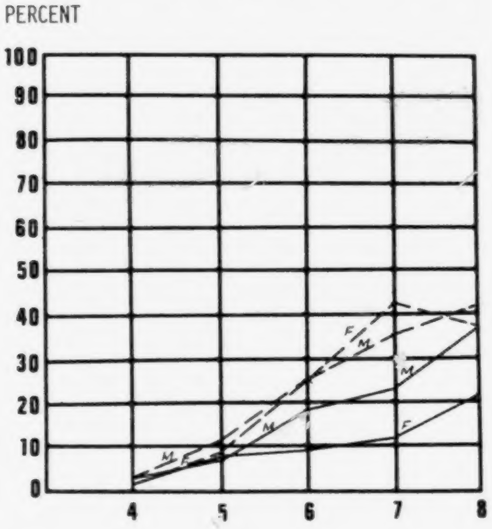


FIGURE 186

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

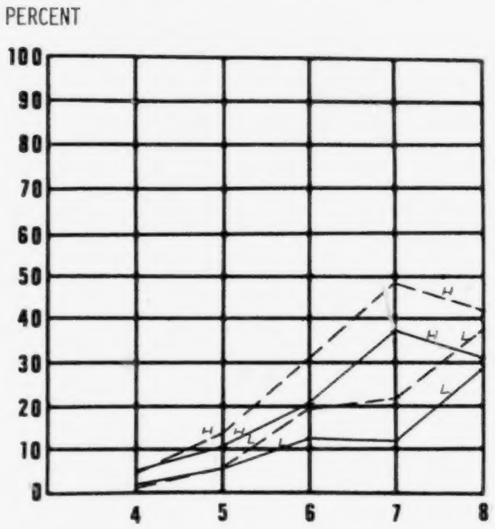


FIGURE 187

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

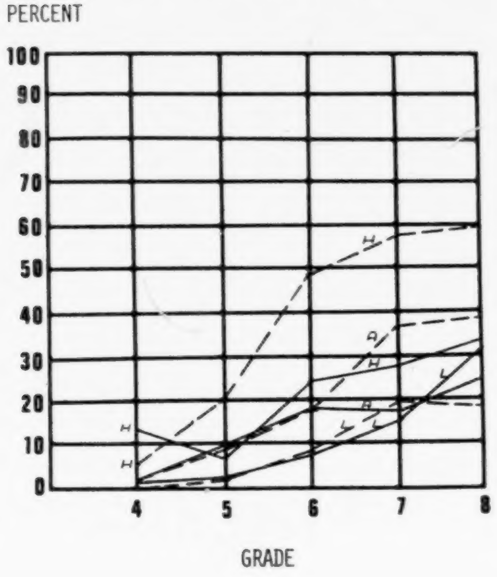


FIGURE 188

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

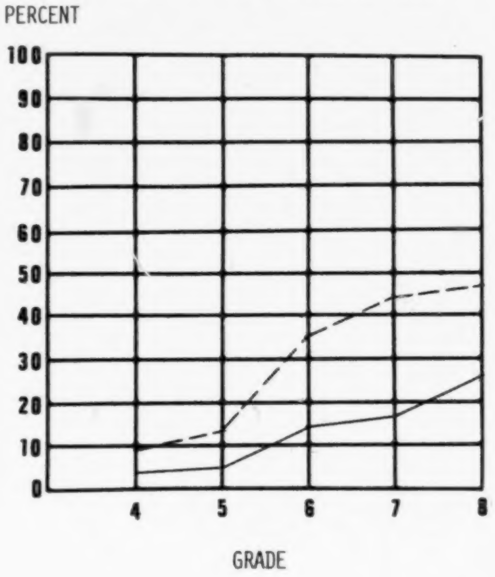


FIGURE 189

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY,
BY SEX OF CHILD

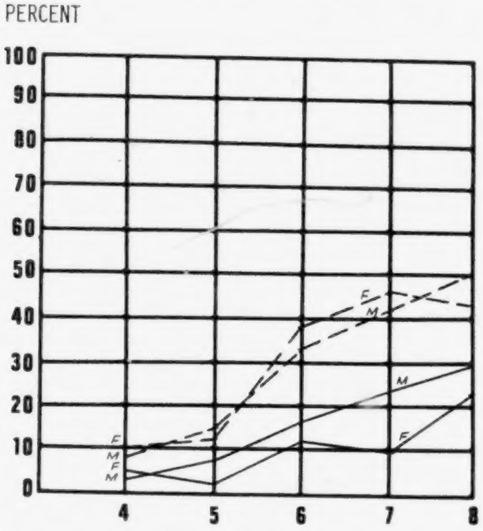


FIGURE 190

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

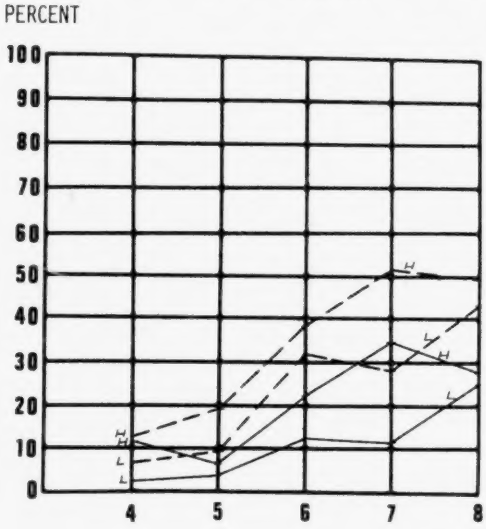


FIGURE 191

CHILDREN REPORTING THE NAMES
OF LEADERS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

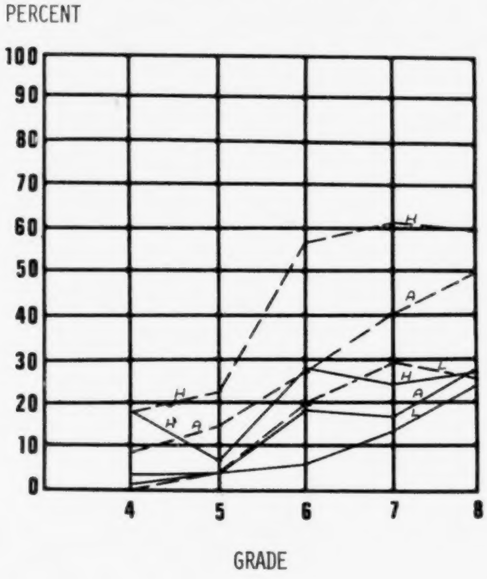


FIGURE 192

CHILDREN REPORTING
REASONABLY ACCURATE POLITICAL RESPONSES

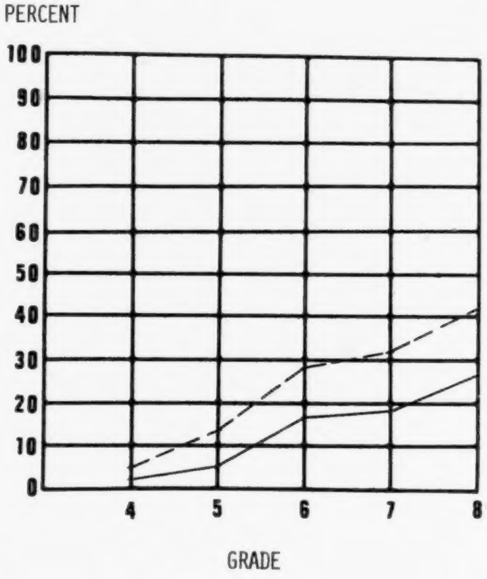


FIGURE 193

CHILDREN REPORTING
REASONABLY ACCURATE POLITICAL RESPONSES,
BY SEX OF CHILD

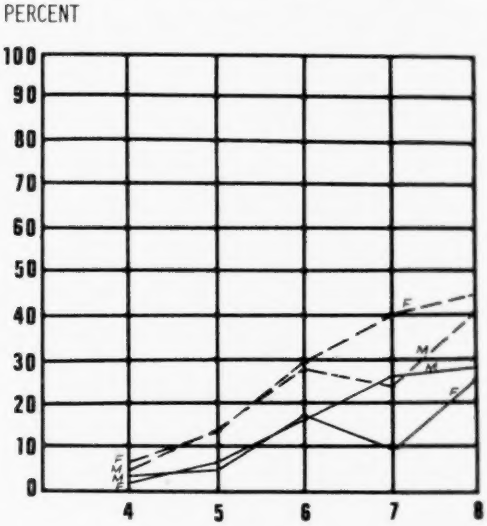


FIGURE 194

CHILDREN REPORTING
REASONABLY ACCURATE POLITICAL RESPONSES,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

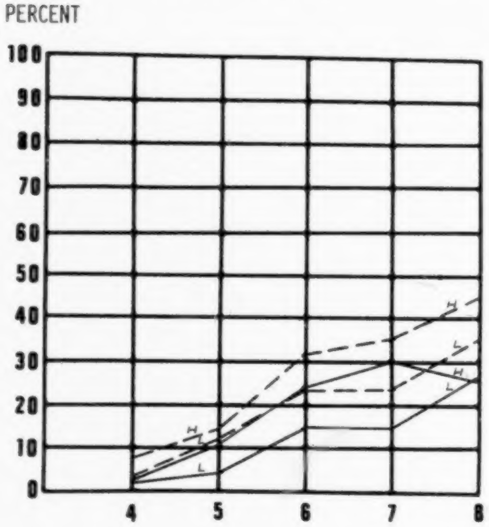


FIGURE 195

CHILDREN REPORTING
REASONABLY ACCURATE POLITICAL RESPONSES,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

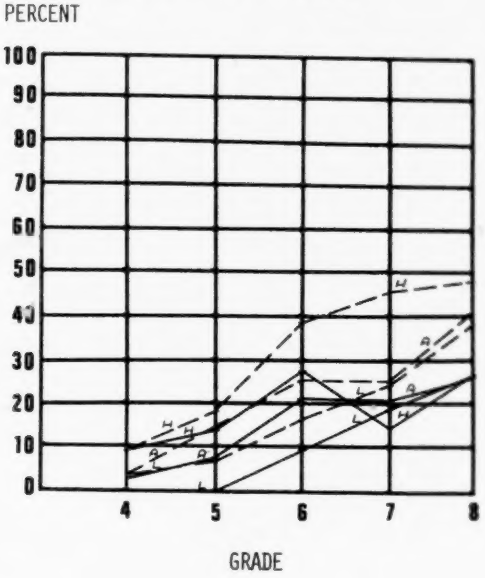
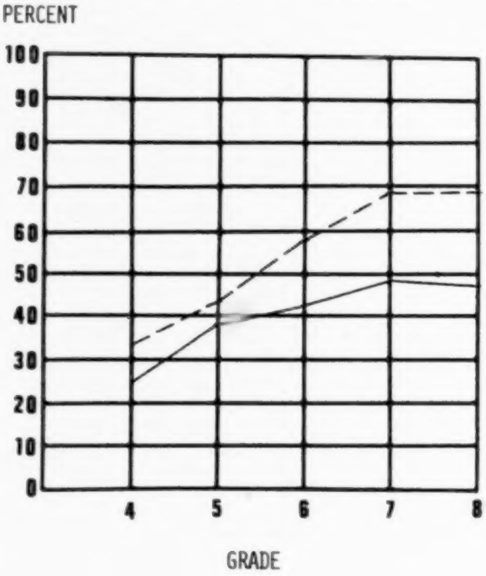


FIGURE 196

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY TOOK SIDES IN AN ELECTION



difference in the learning growth pattern of the Anglo-American children than of the Mexican-American.

In the previous paragraphs differences between the two ethnic groups in their ability to name Democratic Party leaders were examined. When children were also asked to name leaders of the Republican Party the results are very similar. However, considering the high degree of visibility of two important Republican incumbents--the President of the United States and the Governor of California--this task should have been easier than the identification of Democratic Party leaders. However, a comparison of Figures 184 and 188 shows that this was not the case among the Mexican-Americans, and there were only slight increases in the percentages of Anglo-Americans who name a Republican leader.

At successive grade levels the children of each ethnic group grow in their ability to name Republican party leaders, but Anglo-Americans succeed more frequently. Again, the Mexican-American girls report the lowest frequencies (Figure 189). In general, the Anglo-Americans of both status groups report Republican leaders more frequently than do the Mexican-Americans, and the greatest variation in frequency of response may be observed between the Anglo-Americans of upper social status and the Mexican-Americans of lower status (Figure 190). Among the three categories of academic performance there is considerable variation among Anglo-Americans while the frequencies of response for Mexican-Americans at each level of ability are generally more similar (Figure 191).

The next analysis in this section will be concerned with variability between children of the two ethnic groups in their awareness of party differences. Children's descriptions of party differences were examined to find out if they associate particular parties with certain ideology or issues. Since this type of item required children to write out their answers, the task was even more difficult than filling in the names of party leaders. The percentages of reasonably accurate responses are given in Figure 192.

The frequencies reported by children of each group are very similar at the fourth grade level, and growth in their ability to identify ideology and issues increases at successively higher grade levels. The Anglo-American children make accurate political responses more frequently than do the Mexican-American, and the divergence in percentages increases at successive grade levels. It is of particular interest to compare the growth curve in Figure 192 with those of Figures 184 and 188 which are concerned, respectively, with identifying leaders of the Democratic and the Republican Parties. Although identifying and describing ideology or issues are much more difficult tasks than naming prominent political leaders who are highly visible, the patterns of growth on all curves are virtually identical.

Factors associated with ethnicity rather than with the sex of the children seem to account for differences between the two groups, but within each ethnic group sex differences are also apparent (Figure 193). Although the boys and girls of each ethnic group report similar frequencies at the elementary school grades, at the junior high school level the Mexican-American girls report the lowest percentages of political responses while the Anglo-American girls report the highest. Within each ethnic group children of higher social status report political responses more frequently than those of lower status, and as might have been anticipated, the responses of the upper class Anglo-Americans and the lower class Mexican-Americans diverge the most (Figure 194). Within each level of academic performance the Anglo-American children report political responses more frequently than do the Mexican-American up to grade seven. In grade eight, the percentages converge for each ethnic group, and the Mexican-Americans occupy the lowest position. At all grade levels the Anglo-Americans of high ability report the highest percentages of reasonably accurate political responses (Figure 195).

During election campaigns considerable publicity is given to political affairs, and children cannot help but abosrb some information and campaign excitement. Sometimes, teachers conduct mock elections in classrooms, and children vote for their candidates. Often young people are used as helpers in 'get out the vote' campaigns. Their participation in the election can be rather passive such as observing a candidate on television, or they can take part more actively in routine campaign procedures. The several illustrations of participatory activities given in Chapter I indicate that some children may even become highly involved emotionally! In this section, an examination of the extent of children's participation in elections will be made. The investigation was timed to begin after the November elections had taken place. Two kinds of participation will be analyzed: committing oneself to a particular candidate, at least verbally, and working for a candidate by distributing information about him.

Figure 196 depicts information about the extent to which children commit themselves to a candidate or party. Greater percentages of Anglo-American than Mexican-American children indicate that they took sides in the election. Although both groups report frequencies which are very similar in grades four and five, the percentages reported by Anglo-Americans grow at a rapid rate after grade five and surpass the 50% index of significance in grades six, seven and eight. The Mexican-Americans approximate the index at grades seven and eight but do not surpass it, and differences between the two groups increase at successively higher age levels.

FIGURE 197

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY TOOK SIDES IN AN ELECTION,
BY SEX OF CHILD

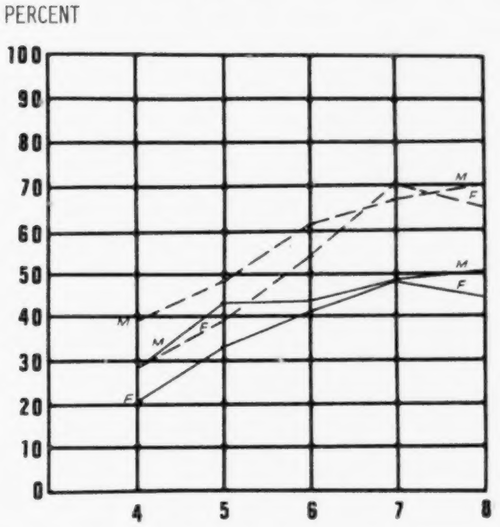


FIGURE 198

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY TOOK SIDES IN AN ELECTION,
BY SOCIAL STATUS

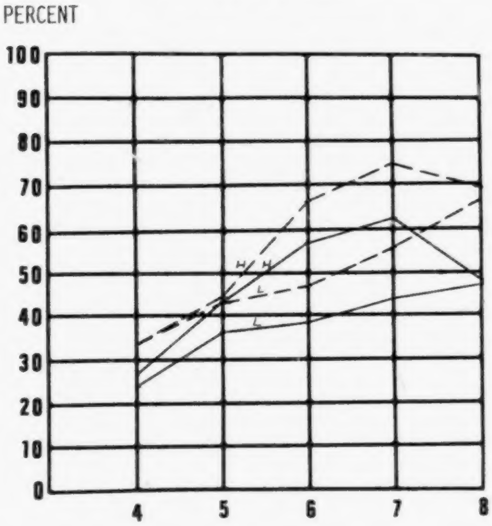


FIGURE 199

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY TOOK SIDES IN AN ELECTION,
BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

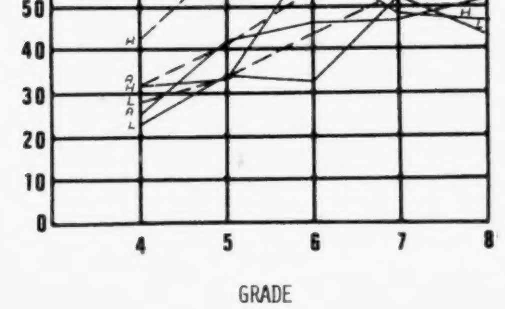


FIGURE 200

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THEY PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY
IN AN ELECTION

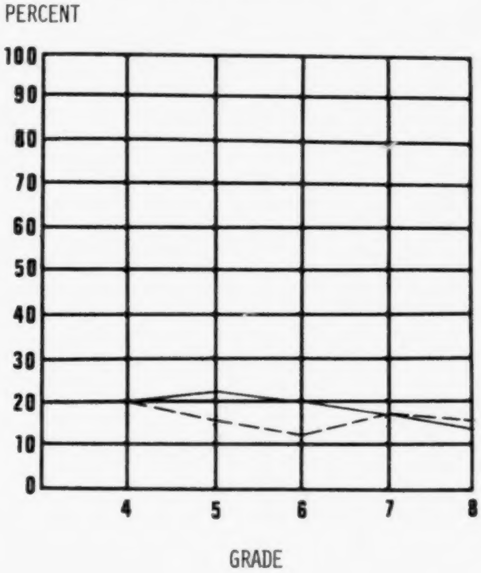


FIGURE 201

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY
PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN
AN ELECTION, BY SEX OF CHILD

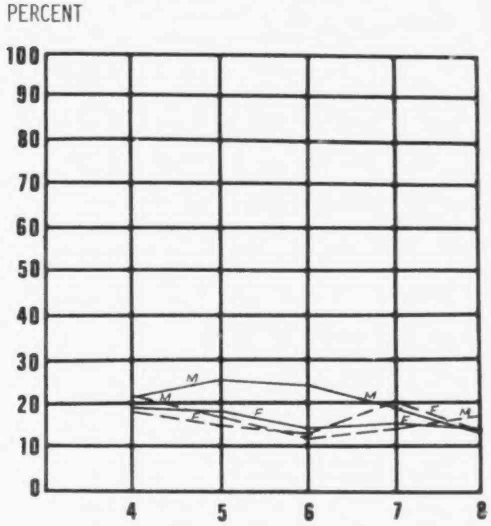


FIGURE 202

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
MUCH HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN
TO THE WINNER

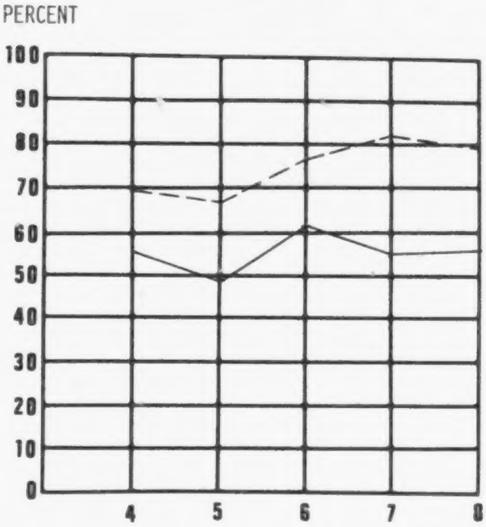


FIGURE 203

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT MUCH HELP
SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE WINNER,
BY SEX OF CHILD

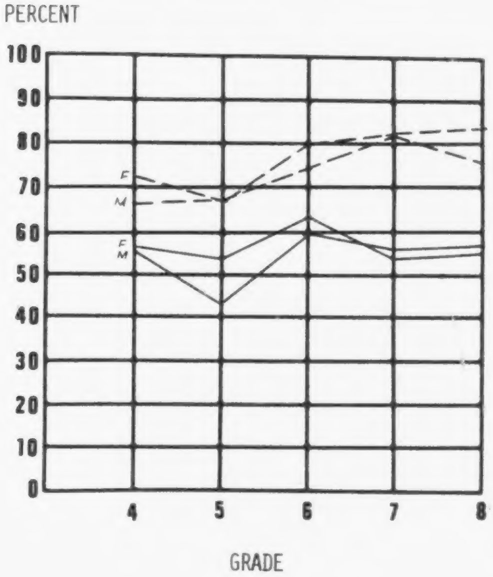
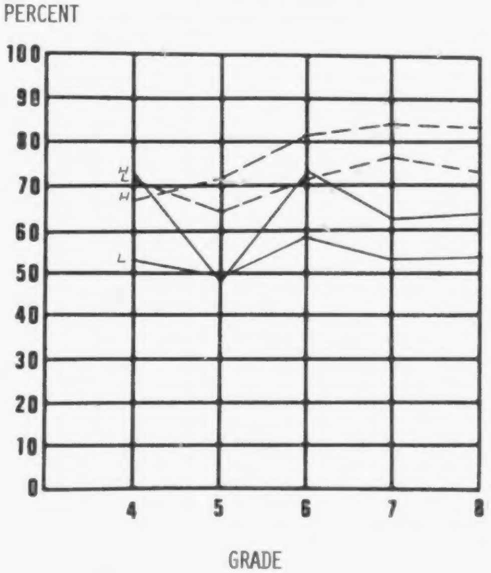


FIGURE 204

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT MUCH HELP
SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE WINNER,
BY SOCIAL STATUS



Factors associated with ethnicity rather than with the sex of the child seem to account for differences since within each ethnic group, and especially among older children, the percentages of responses are very similar (Figure 197). Within each ethnic group, children of upper social status report commitment more frequently than do those of lower status, and the greatest disparity occurs between Anglo-Americans of upper status and Mexican-Americans of lower status (Figure 198). The level of academic performance of the child influences the frequencies which are reported by Anglo-Americans but not by Mexican-Americans. The percentages that are reported by Anglo-Americans of upper ability are the highest; those reported by children of average ability follow next in order; and frequencies recorded by the lower ability group lag behind (Figure 199). Except for a fluctuation at grade six, all ability levels of Mexican-Americans grow at about the same rate.

As might have been anticipated, the percentages of children from either ethnic group who participated actively in the elections are quite low and little change takes place at successively higher grade levels (Figure 200). It is of special interest to note, however, that at certain grade levels the percentages of Mexican-American children who participated actively are slightly greater than those of the Anglo-American, and the Mexican-American boys participated with the greater frequency (Figure 201). It is evident that within each ethnic group the proportion of 'activists' is very small, but it is also important to observe that when children from each ethnic group are selected for study on the basis of their activism, greater percentages of Mexican-American children are found to be actively involved. However, these findings are merely suggestive, since the percentages are based only on a small sample of 200 Mexican-Americans and 250 Anglo-Americans.

The concluding analysis to be made in this section concerns attitudes toward the legitimacy of the regime. During election campaigns much antagonism between opposing candidates and parties is generated, but once the vote is taken emotion usually subsides and in accordance with regime norms, the winner must be accepted as the legitimate official. Those who opposed his candidacy may accept the legal leader unenthusiastically, but it is expected that proper respect will be given to the office. If one desires to continue to oppose the leader, it must be done according to the prevailing customs. Hence, the function of the office is legitimized although one may continue to disapprove of the incumbent. In presidential elections it is customary for the losing candidate to request his followers to support the Presidency.

In order to discern the degree to which children have internalized the concept of legitimacy, they were asked to indicate the extent to which a person who voted for a candidate who lost an election should afterwards help the winner do a good job in running the government. The responses to this question are grouped in three categories: "help a lot or all he can," "help a little or not at all," and "don't know." Those recorded in the first category, "He should help a lot or all he can," are given in Figure 202.

Significant numbers of children at all grade levels have internalized the concept of legitimacy. Nevertheless, the Anglo-Americans report higher frequencies than do the Mexican-Americans, and at grades seven and eight the disparity between the two groups increases. Factors associated with ethnicity rather than with the sex of the children or their social status seem to account for differences between the two groups (Figures 203, 204). However, within each ethnic group more children of higher social status seem to have internalized this concept than those of lower status. Anglo-Americans of high academic performance report the largest frequencies and Mexican-Americans of lower ability the smallest. At grades seven and eight the frequencies reported by Mexican-Americans within each level of ability diverge (Figure 205).

The extent to which children are developing attitudes toward regime legitimacy can be judged through examination of Figure 206. Higher percentages of Mexican-Americans than Anglo-Americans indicate that they "don't know" the extent to which those who voted for the loser should support the winner. The decline in "don't know" responses is very slight throughout the grades. Factors associated with ethnicity rather than with sex of child and social status seem to account for differences between the two groups (Figures 207, 208). In grades seven and eight, however, the percentages of "don't know" responses decline sharply among Mexican-Americans of high academic performance; this change is principally toward internalization of the norms relating to regime legitimacy (Figures 209, 205).

Section Summary

In this section of Chapter IV, feelings of Mexican-American and Anglo-American children toward regime norms were examined. Analyses were made to discern differences between the two groups in their partisan commitment, involvement in politics, and attitudes concerning the legitimacy of governmental office. The analysis of children's intentions to vote when they are adult reveals that at all grade levels significant percentages from each ethnic group have accepted this role. However, among all groups the Mexican-American children of lower social status report with the lowest percentages their intention to vote. There is the possibility that these children have learned very little about how citizens express their opinions or perhaps they

FIGURE 205

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT MUCH HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE WINNER, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

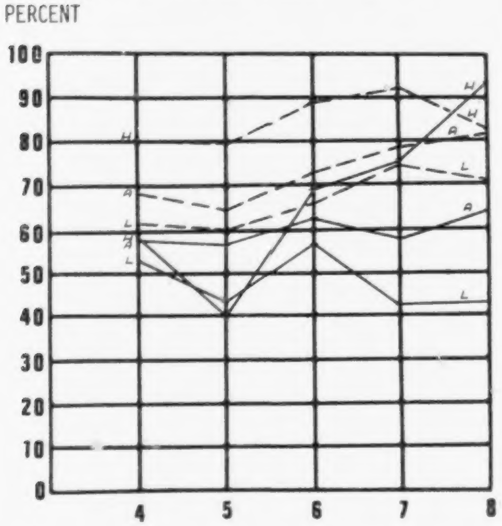


FIGURE 206

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" HOW MUCH HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE WINNER

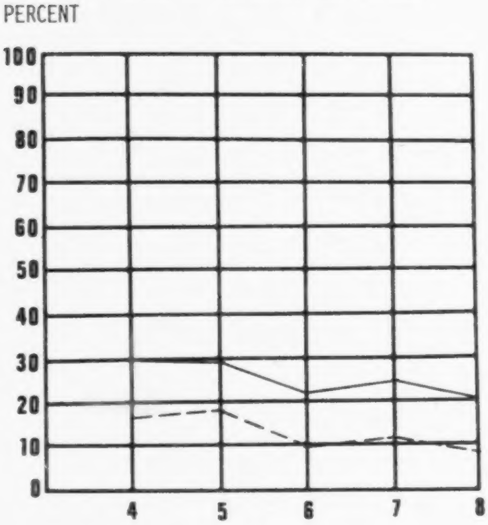


FIGURE 207

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" HOW MUCH HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE WINNER, BY SEX OF CHILD

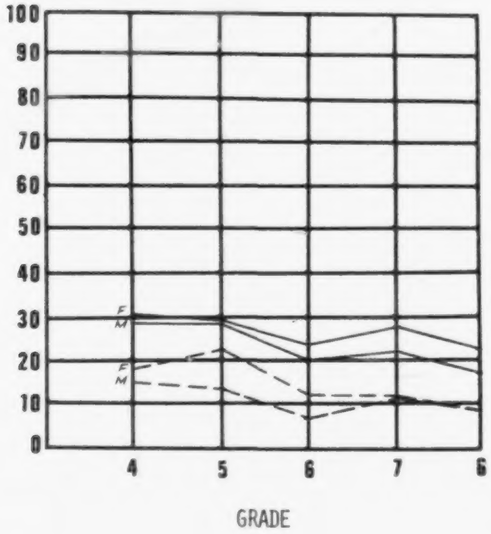


FIGURE 208

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" HOW MUCH HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE WINNER, BY SOCIAL STATUS

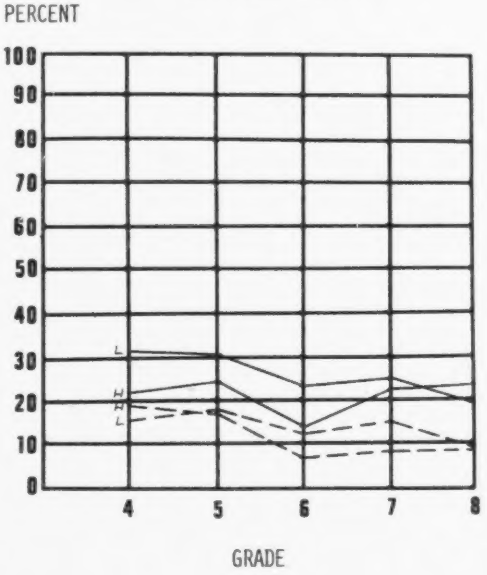


FIGURE 209

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" HOW MUCH HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE WINNER, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

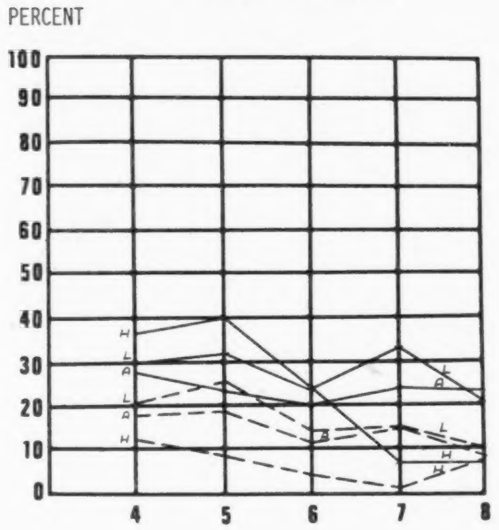


FIGURE 210

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT CITIZENS CANNOT INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT

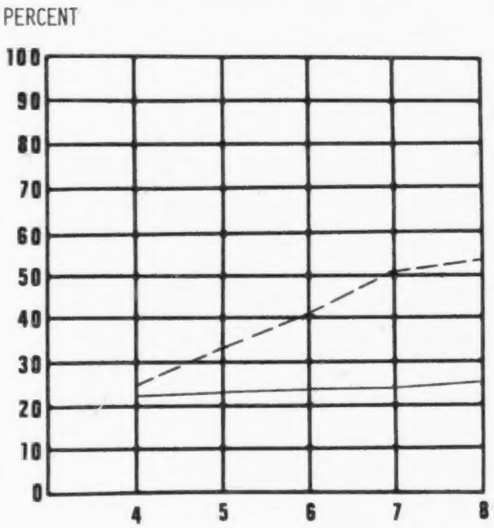


FIGURE 211

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT CITIZENS CANNOT INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT, BY SEX OF CHILD

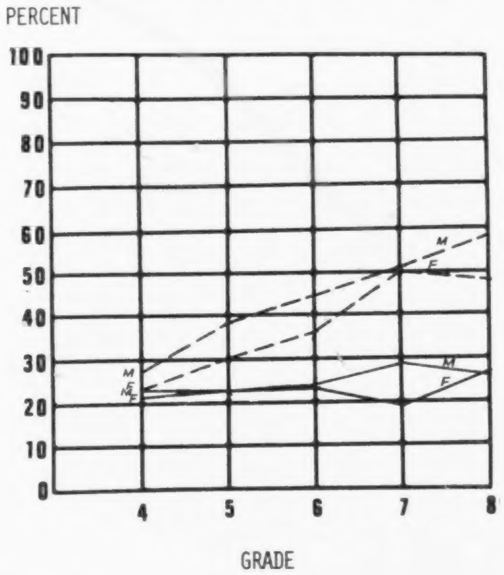
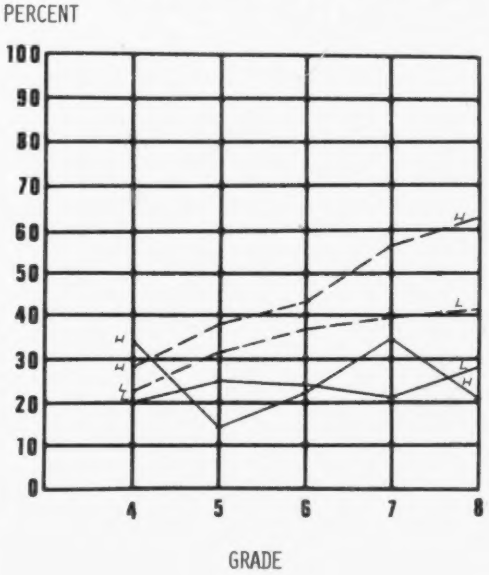


FIGURE 212

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT CITIZENS CANNOT INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT, BY SOCIAL STATUS



are not aware of the need for participation in the political process. In either case, one important citizenship need of Mexican-American children is identified.

Of the two ethnic groups, larger percentages of Anglo-Americans are convinced of the importance of belonging to a political party, and frequencies increase as children get older. This feeling is also expressed more often by children of upper social status and high ability. Large percentages of Mexican-American children do not grasp the importance of party affiliation because they seem to lack knowledge about the very meaning of political party. This is particularly true among girls who show little growth in understanding of the concept until grade eight. At grade four almost 50% of the girls do not know the meaning of political party and even at grade seven the percentage level is still above 40%. This special need should be included as an objective in new plans for curriculum construction: concepts and understanding must be developed which show the relationship of the political parties to the functioning of the system. Indeed, since the percentages of children of each ethnic group who report that they do not know whether or not one should support a political party remains relatively constant throughout the grades, such instruction may be of value to all children.

Other reasons why fewer of the Mexican-American children report feelings that party affiliation is important may be related either to lack of party membership on the part of their parents or failure within the family to communicate partisan information. It was reported previously that regardless of social status and ability, Mexican-American children are not as aware of their parents' party affiliations as are Anglo-American. At the same time, more of the Anglo-Americans are ready to reject their parents' party affiliation. This does not necessarily mean that they will not vote as their parents do. Rather, it suggests that as they grow older more and more Anglo-Americans accept the idea that one should make up his own mind about party preferences. There is much agreement among researchers that the party preference of parents is one of the orientations most readily assumed by children.[6] Since at an early age Anglo-Americans are more aware of their parents' party preferences than are the Mexican-Americans, they are in a better position to acquire one. On the other hand, the Mexican-American children have less likelihood of doing so.

Children were also asked to indicate which one of five alternatives would be likely to fulfill their future voting intentions: voting for Democrats, for Republicans, or possibly for a third party, voting independently, or 'don't know.' Lack of commitment to a political party or to the concept of independence in voting is associated more with the females of each ethnic group than with the males, and it is particularly characteristic of Mexican-American girls. The number of years spent in school affects growth in attitude among girls of the latter group very little. From a peak of almost 70% in grade five, frequencies reported by Mexican-American girls decline only to about 50% in grade eight. Attitudes toward independence in voting, on the other hand, are internalized to a much greater extent by the Anglo-Americans, regardless of sex of child, social status or level of academic performance.

If growth toward either party affiliation or independence of voting is a desirable objective for citizenship in a participant culture, it is clear that the one ethnic group--the Anglo-American--is progressing at a more rapid rate. The Mexican-American girls lag behind the Anglo-American girls in growth toward both objectives. In addition, the Anglo-American boys and girls surpass the Mexican-American boys in growth toward the concept of independence in voting. The school is in an excellent position to help narrow the gap, but in addition, however, it must also assume the delicate task of helping all children appraise more realistically the relative merits of either party affiliation or independence.

Of the two norms, the one which is more likely to be reinforced by the school is that independence in voting is desirable. Voting for the political party is not. The individual is urged to study the backgrounds of candidates and vote on the issues. Since the Mexican-American children do not internalize either norm as frequently as do the Anglo-American, short units of work might be developed which focus upon the variety of ways in which people make up their minds about voting. Through study of the experiential background of political leaders and their activities, children might also discover that among the most politically efficacious individuals, the most partisan are also likely to be found! Thus, through the more realistic study and appraisal of both patterns of political behavior, the school can help children make up their own minds about partisan commitment or independence. This approach should be of special benefit to the Mexican-American children.

When the rather difficult task of naming Democratic and Republican leaders was presented to children, the Anglo-Americans were able to provide accurate responses with greater frequency than were the Mexican-Americans. In naming leaders of the Democratic Party, the Mexican-American girls had the least success, while the responses of boys were closer to those of the Anglo-Americans. Mexican-American children of lower social status also had difficulty, and there were only relatively small variations in the frequencies of response among the three ability levels. A similar pattern emerges in the naming of Republican leaders. Only Anglo-Americans of high ability report significant growth in percentages at successive grade levels. In short, academic ability seems to make little difference in the amount of information that Mexican-American children report about political leaders and issues; therefore, one can conclude that a coalescence of factors associated with ethnicity, sex of child, and social status affects their learning adversely.

It is surprising to discern that the children of each ethnic group, and the Mexican-Americans in particular, seem to have only slightly less success in identifying and describing political issues than in naming political leaders. The latter task, which is so much easier than the former, should have resulted in very much higher percentages, if for no other reason than because of the high visibility of two incumbent Republicans: the Governor of California and the President of the United States. While the Anglo-Americans name the Republican leaders with slightly greater frequency than they identify political issues, the Mexican-Americans do not.

Although Mexican-American children have greater difficulty in identifying leaders and issues than do the Anglo-American, both groups find it almost as easy to identify issues as to name leaders. More intensive analysis of these data might reveal that the same students are responding correctly to both questions, since the percentage of children from this age group who react to political stimuli is likely to be rather small.[7] Whether or not the two sets of responses are related to one another, it would be worth while to find out if the growth curves could be raised by introducing children to units of study which bear directly on political parties and issues. The data which is included in this report might then serve as baseline information for making comparisons of growth and judging the effectiveness of instruction.

There is little doubt that more of the Anglo-American children than the Mexican-American commit themselves, at least verbally, to a candidate or party during an election, and differences in the percentages that are reported by the two groups become greater at successive grade levels. However, active participation is another matter. Although the number of children who participate in campaigns is very small, among such activists the Mexican-American children participate as often as the Anglo-American, and indeed the evidence indicates that they participate with greater frequency! A question which occurs is whether or not the school or any other agency of socialization can do more to foster activism among young children. Age itself is not necessarily the primary consideration; if children are not too young to enter highly organized and competitive sports such as baseball and football, they cannot be judged to be too young to participate in campaigns. However, at elementary and junior high school grade levels child exploitation for noneducational goals could easily occur because the school would not be able to supervise or control such activities close enough; therefore, decisions about how much time should be spent in out-of-school political participation might best be left to the judgment of the parents and the children themselves.

At an early age the majority of children have internalized feelings about the legitimacy of governmental roles, but the Mexican-Americans do not grow in this attitude at successive grade levels. At the same time, many of them are uncertain about the extent to which they should support the winner of an election whom they opposed. Therefore, within the classroom, and particularly in connection with a unit of study on election procedures, the concept of legitimacy should be introduced. The relationship between the stability of a system and feelings about the legitimacy of political authorities should be discussed, but in addition the procedures through which opposition may be registered and changes can be promoted should also be explored.

Feelings About Political Efficacy

In the previous section, an examination was made of the extent to which children have acquired norms which are associated with their potential political involvement in the political process. But internalizing attitudes about how one ought to behave is not sufficient for functioning successfully in the participant political culture. Citizens must also feel that they can indeed affect decision-making; otherwise they would not be likely to engage in behavior which is actually directed toward influencing the political process. While it is possible to find some persons who believe that they are influencing government but who in fact may not be doing so, it is difficult to believe that any citizenry will engage in sustained political activity without some expectation of being effective. In this section, then, the development of children's feelings of political efficacy will be analyzed.

The first set of responses to be examined concerns the belief that the power of government is not infinite and that citizens are able to influence decisions. Children were asked to respond, "Yes," "No," or "I don't know," to the questionnaire item: "What happens in the government will happen no matter what people do. There is nothing people can do to change what the government does." Figure 210 presents the percentages for children who disagree with the statement. Although frequencies for each ethnic group are very similar in grade four, growth in the percentages of response among Anglo-American children proceeds steadily throughout the grades, while there is no corresponding growth among the Mexican-Americans. The stability of the belief among Mexican-American children that government cannot be influenced is dramatically demonstrated by the flatness of the curve.

Factors associated with ethnicity account for the disparity between the two groups rather than children's sex, social status, and level of academic performance (Figures 211, 212, 213). Among the Anglo-Americans, social status and level of

FIGURE 213

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT CITIZENS CANNOT INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

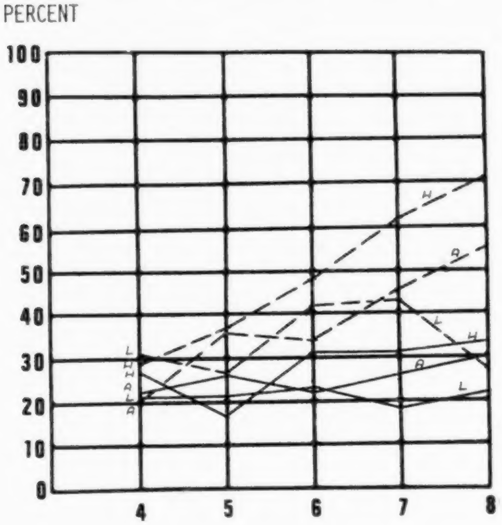


FIGURE 214

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF GOVERNMENT CAN BE INFLUENCED

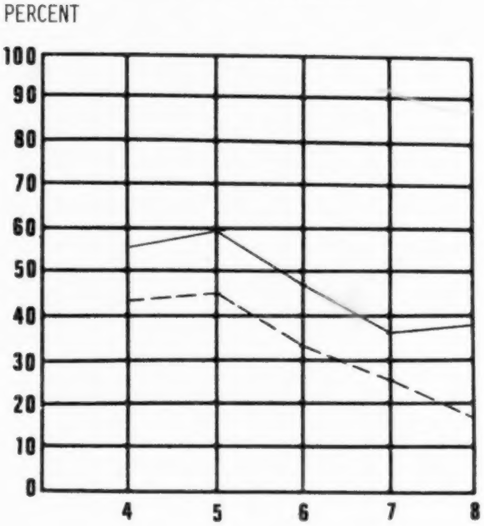


FIGURE 215

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF GOVERNMENT CAN BE INFLUENCED, BY SEX OF CHILD

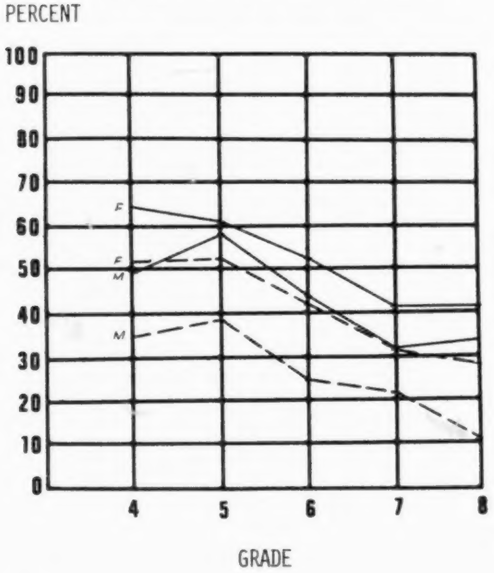


FIGURE 216

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF GOVERNMENT CAN BE INFLUENCED, BY SOCIAL STATUS

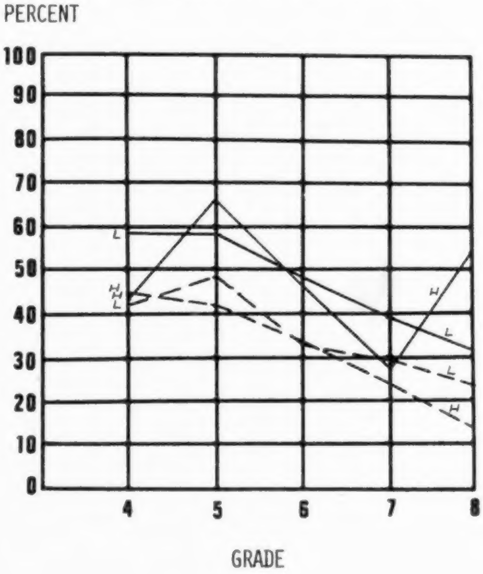


FIGURE 217

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF GOVERNMENT CAN BE INFLUENCED, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

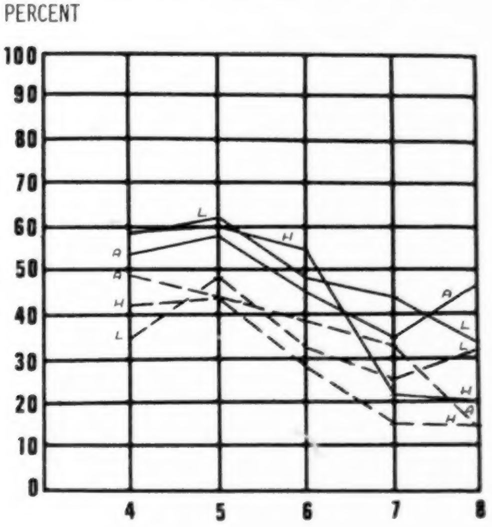


FIGURE 218

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING

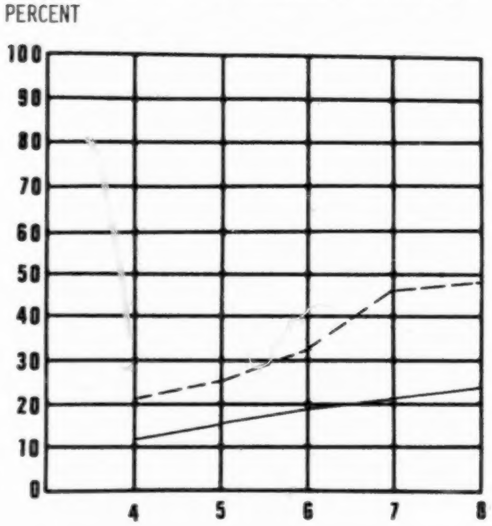


FIGURE 219

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING, BY SEX OF CHILD

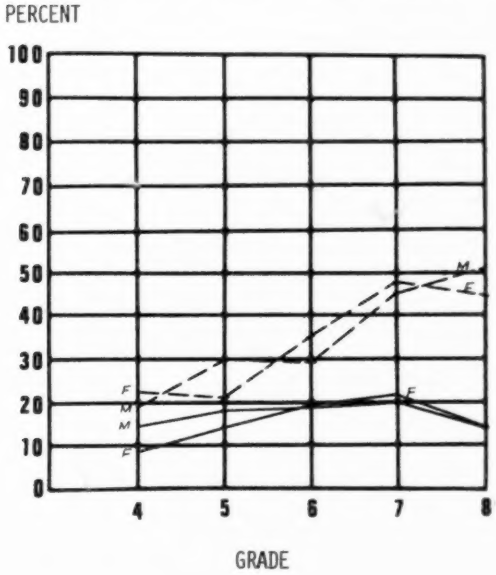


FIGURE 220

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING, BY SOCIAL STATUS

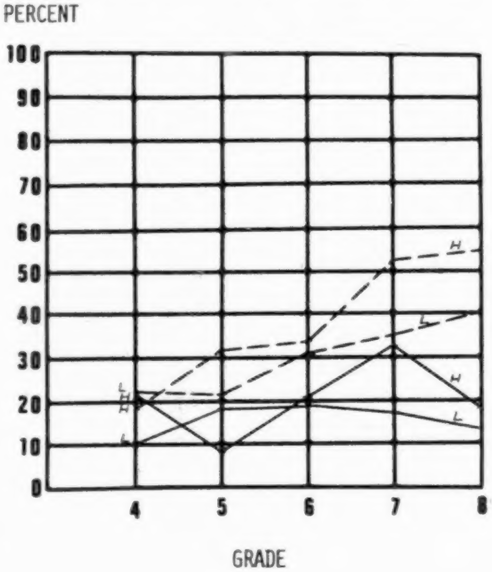


FIGURE 221

CHILDREN REPORTING THEY DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

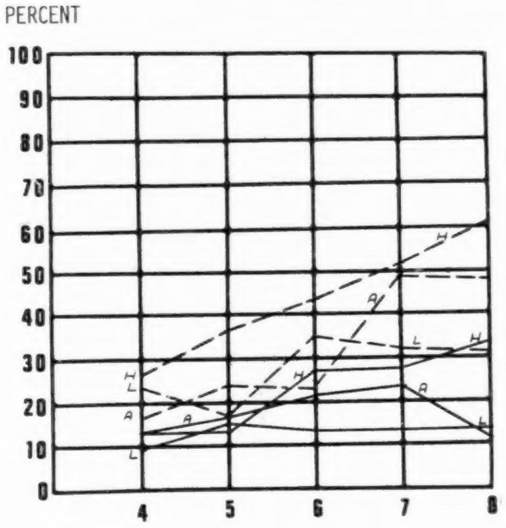


FIGURE 222

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING

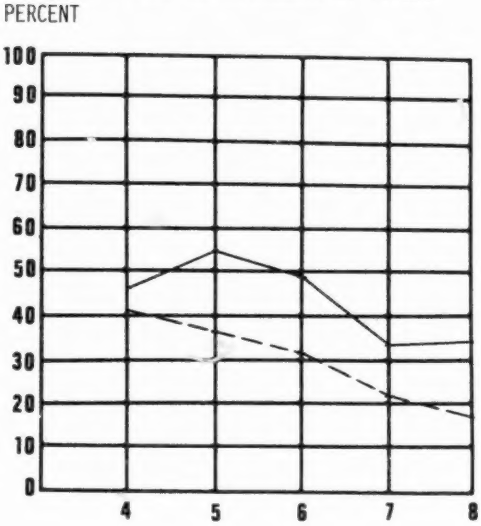


FIGURE 223

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING, BY SEX OF CHILD

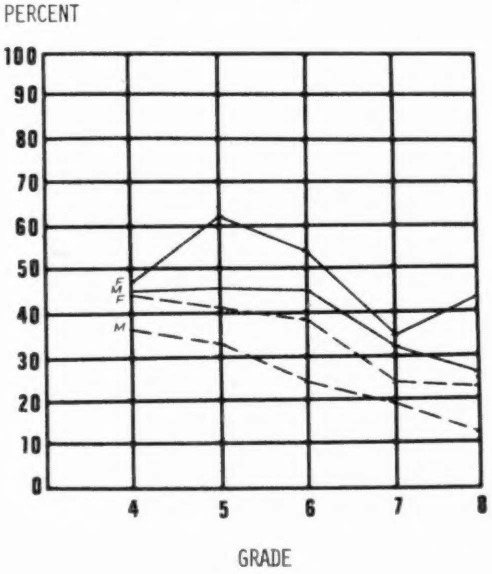


FIGURE 224

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING, BY SOCIAL STATUS

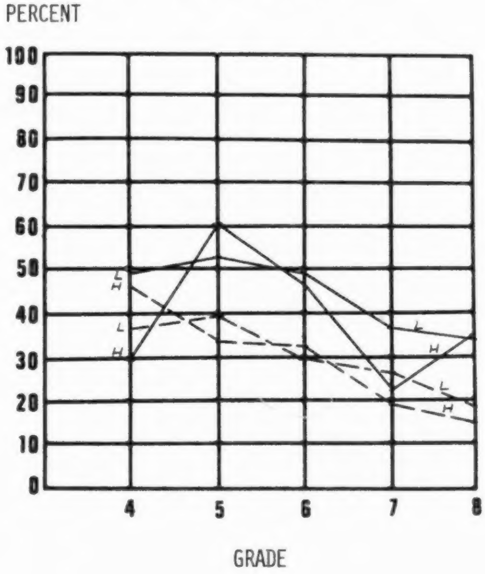


FIGURE 225

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY "DON'T KNOW" IF THE GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE INFLUENCED BY VOTING, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

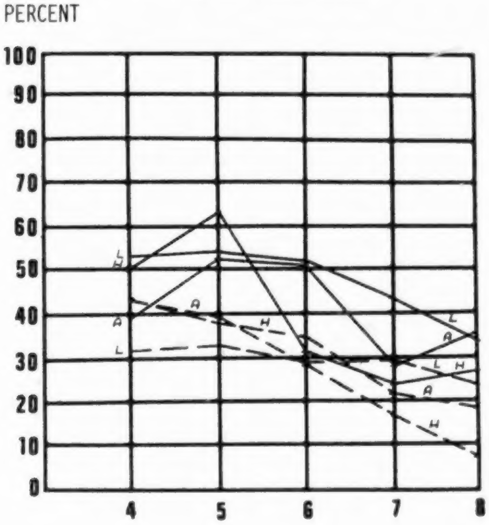


FIGURE 226

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY ARE AWARE OF THE POWER OF GROUP EFFORT

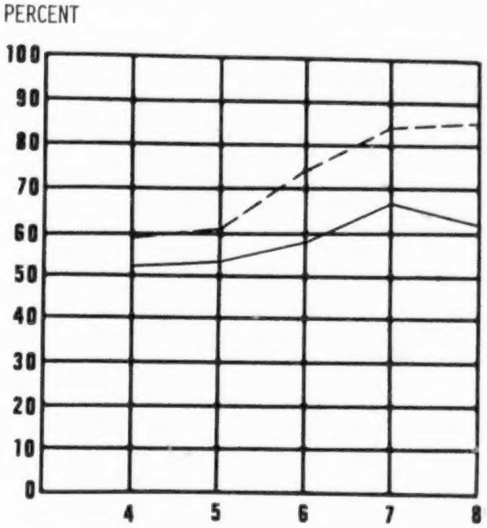


FIGURE 227

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY ARE AWARE OF THE POWER OF GROUP EFFORT, BY SEX OF CHILD

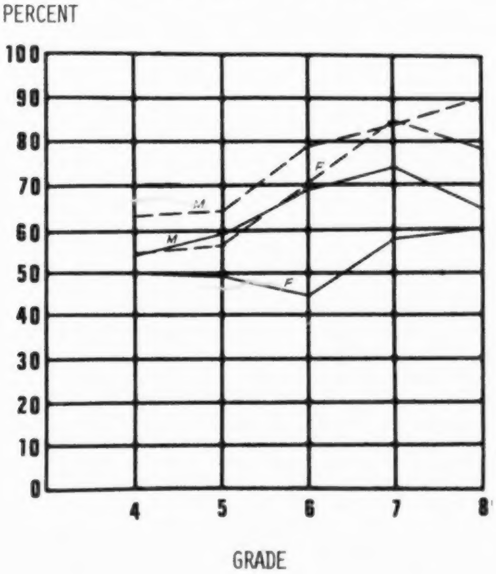
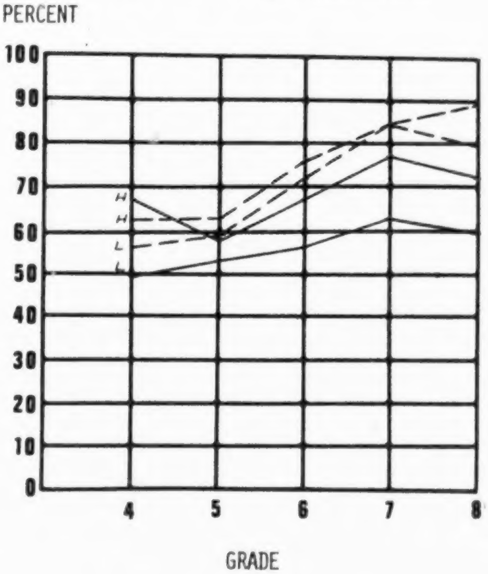


FIGURE 228

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY ARE AWARE OF THE POWER OF GROUP EFFORT, BY SOCIAL STATUS



academic performance emerge as important attributes which are related to their disagreeing with the statement. More Anglo-Americans of high social status feel able to influence government than those of low status. Anglo-Americans of high ability report the highest percentages; at grade six they closely approximate the 50% index of significant awareness and surpass it with rapid growth in grades seven and eight.

Examination of the "don't know" responses provides further insight into the development of feelings of efficacy among children. Not only do smaller percentages of Mexican-American children feel that they can influence government as compared to the Anglo-American, but more of them are also uncertain about whether or not government is responsive (Figures 210, 214). Furthermore, the sharp decline in percentage of response at successively higher grade levels is an indication that as the Mexican-American children grow older, feelings that government is impervious increase (Figure 214). Figure 215 indicates that relatively high percentages of "don't know" responses are associated with the sex of the child as well as with his ethnic group background. Within each ethnic group, the girls report higher frequencies than do the boys. In general, the Mexican-American children also report higher percentages of "don't know" responses than do the Anglo-American when the data are classified by social status and level of academic performance (Figures 216, 217).

Related to the question of whether or not children are developing feelings that government can be influenced is the one concerning how influence is exercised. This information was obtained by presenting children with the statement which follows to find out if they agree, disagree, or just don't know: "Voting is the only way that people like my mother and father can have any say about how the government runs things." It would seem that an easy answer to this question might have been "yes," since in our society much emphasis is placed upon voting, and this is particularly true at election time. Nevertheless, only about one-third of the children within each ethnic group did agree with this statement, and throughout the grades the percentages varied very little.

Figure 218 depicts the percentages of children who disagree with the statement. At all grade levels greater percentages of the Anglo-Americans report that they disagree, and there is considerable growth at successive grade levels; there is only slight growth in the frequencies recorded by Mexican-Americans. Although approximately a third of the Anglo-Americans are ready to accept the vote as an important instrument for influencing government, increasing numbers of them feel that government can also be reached through other means. This is a sophisticated concept for children to grasp, and such growth, although slight, is also evident among the Mexican-American children.

The disparity between the two groups appears to be affected more by factors associated with ethnicity than by those related to sex of the child, social status, and level of academic performance (Figures 219, 220, 221). However, among Anglo-Americans the effects of social class membership and academic performance may also be observed. Children of upper status and high academic performance show the greatest growth in feeling that voting is not the only way to exercise influence on government. Among the Mexican-American children those who are within the high ability category also show the greatest growth, but it is important to observe that the percentages which they report just approximate the levels of those recorded by the Anglo-Americans of low ability.

The Mexican-American children report the highest frequencies of response to the "don't know" category (Figure 222). Not only do smaller percentages of these children disagree with the statement that voting is the only way to exercise influence on government, but compared with Anglo-American children greater percentages of them are uncertain. Factors associated with ethnicity seem to account for differences between the two groups. In general, higher frequencies of "don't know" responses are recorded by the Mexican-American children than by the Anglo-American when the data are classified by sex of the child, social status, and level of academic performance (Figures 223, 224, 225). However, within each ethnic group, girls report higher frequencies of "don't know" choices than do the males; therefore it can also be concluded that doubt about whether or not the government can only be influenced by voting is also related to the sex of children.

One way of increasing the amount of power which can be brought to bear on government is through the formation of associations. Therefore, an item designed to discern the extent to which children are aware of the power of group effort was included in the questionnaire. Children were asked to agree, disagree, or indicate "don't know" to the statement: "If people work together they will have a better chance of getting what they want from government." The "yes" responses to this statement are analyzed below.

Figure 226 indicates that at an early age children of each ethnic group recognize the importance of group solidarity in achieving political ends. All grade groups surpass the 50% level of significant awareness. However, the Anglo-Americans agree with greater frequency than do the Mexican-Americans, and their rate of growth is sharper. Factors associated with ethnicity rather than with sex of child and social status account for differences between the two groups in their frequency of response, but among the Mexican-Americans variability according to sex and social status is also evident: smaller percentages of the females and children who are of lower social status have internalized this concept (Figures 227, 228).

FIGURE 229

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEY ARE AWARE OF THE POWER OF GROUP EFFORT, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

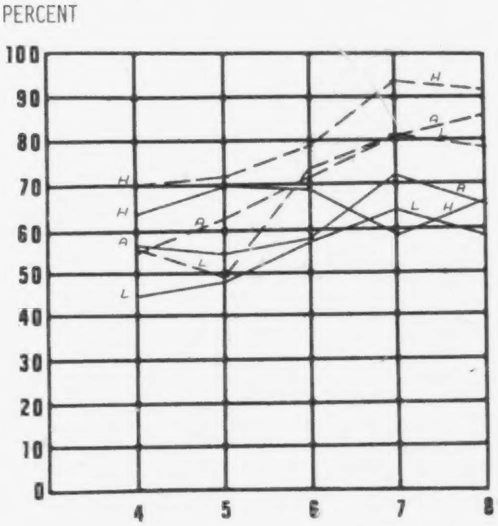


FIGURE 230

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT POLICEMEN INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME

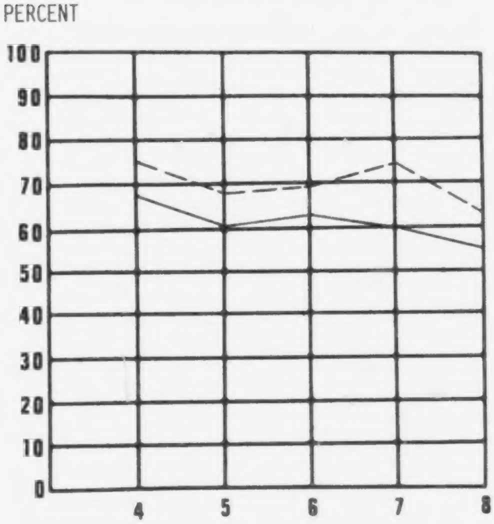


FIGURE 231

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT POLICEMEN INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME, BY SEX OF CHILD

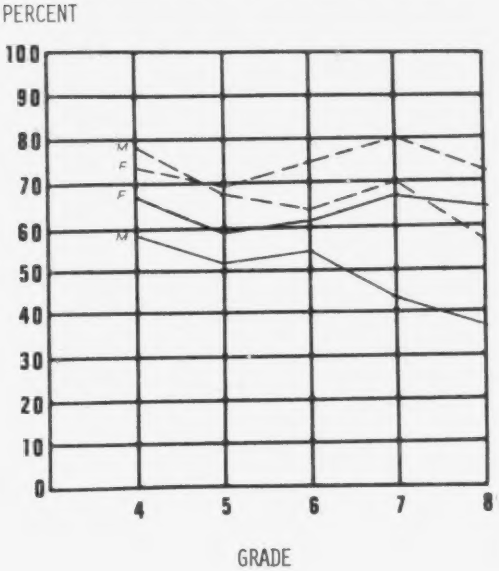


FIGURE 232

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT POLICEMEN INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME, BY SOCIAL STATUS

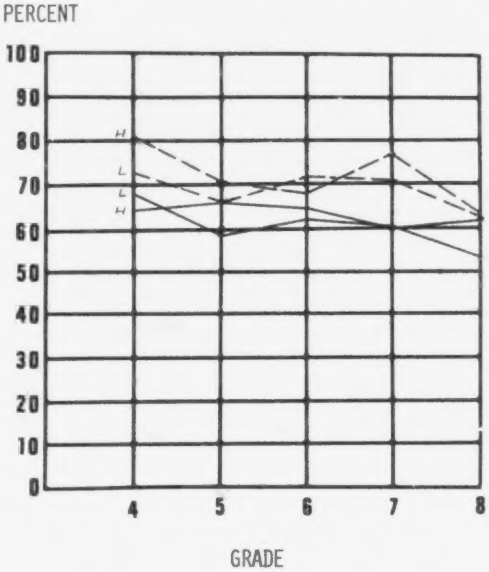


FIGURE 233

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT POLICEMEN INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

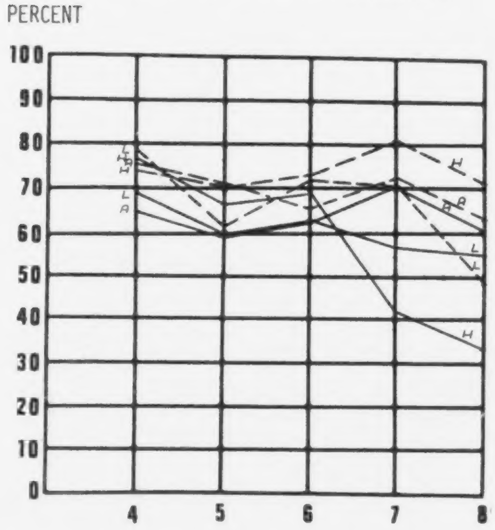


FIGURE 234

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEIR FAMILIES INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME

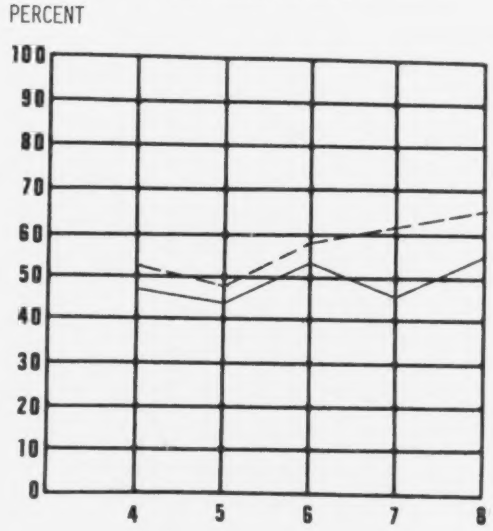


FIGURE 235

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEIR FAMILIES INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME, BY SEX OF CHILD

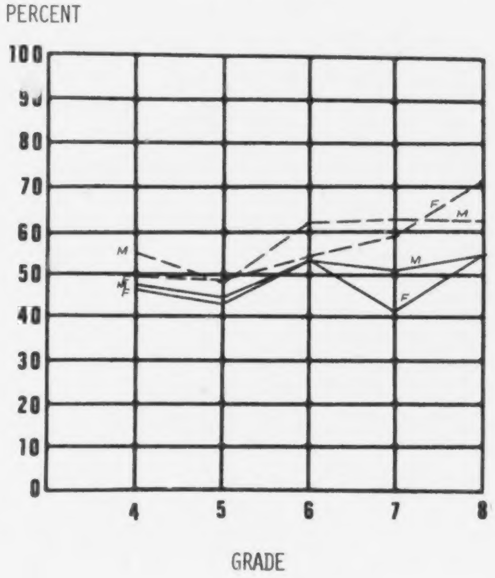
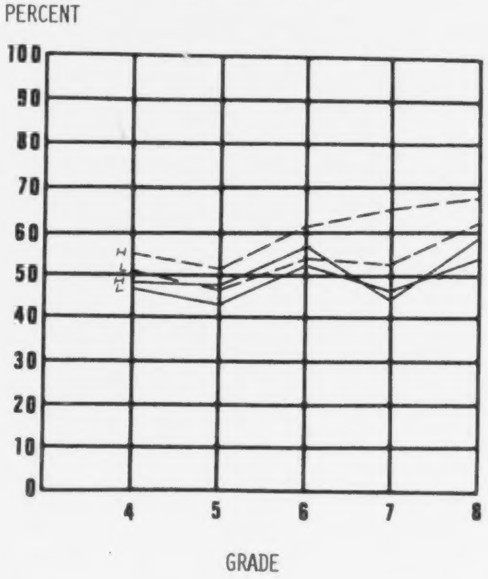


FIGURE 236

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEIR FAMILIES INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME, BY SOCIAL STATUS



Anglo-Americans of high academic performance indicate the greatest percentages of support for the concept of group solidarity, but there is no similar pattern of growth among the Mexican-American children of equal ability (Figure 229). Indeed, beginning at grade six, all three ability levels of the former group report frequencies which surpass those of the Mexican-American children.

The discussion which will conclude this section is concerned with children's perception of the influence of individuals and special interest groups in the political process. It was already observed that about a third of the children believe that voting is the only way that citizens can influence government, but at the same time the majority of children are also aware of benefits to be derived through group effort. Are children also aware of the degree to which the several special interest groups exercise power in law-making? In order to try to answer this question, children were asked to indicate their feelings about the extent to which different groups of people help shape the laws. The responses are grouped into three categories: "very much or some," "very little or not at all," and "don't know." Table 4 presents the changes by grade and subculture in children's perception of the groups which contribute "very much or some" to the making of laws. Tables 5 and 6 show, respectively, the relative rankings of the several categories of individuals and interest groups at each grade level according to the frequencies reported by the Anglo-American and the Mexican-American children.

It is evident from Table 4 that on this scale of efficacy children place policemen, television broadcasters, and ordinary people like members of their own families among the three highest categories, while newspapers, big business, persons of wealth, and labor unions are generally excluded from the highest three rankings, except for the responses of fourth and fifth grade Mexican-Americans.[8]

In almost every instance, the children place the policeman highest in rank at each grade level, and he is displaced from this position only by the Anglo-Americans in grade eight (Tables 5 and 6). Figure 230 shows that more Anglo-American than Mexican-American children view the policeman as being influential in making law, and there is only a slight decline at successive grade levels. The efficacy of the policeman is not only related to ethnicity, but it is associated with sex of child as well. Within each ethnic group the highest percentages are reported by the girls, and the males show the sharper rate of decline at successive grade levels. It is of particular interest to contrast the relatively high frequencies reported by the Anglo-American girls with the much lower percentages recorded by the Mexican-American males (Figure 231). It would seem that the girls within each ethnic group and also the Anglo-American males have either a high degree of misinformation about the

Table 4

Children's Perception of the Groups Which Contribute "Very Much" or "Some" to the Making of Laws

Grade	4	5	6	7	8	N	Total N	% of Total Group
Policemen								
Anglo-American	76.1	68.3	69.6	74.8	62.8	1083	1731	66.9
Mexican-American	68.0	60.6	63.2	60.1	55.4	648		
Television Broadcaster								
Anglo-American	55.2	48.8	53.0	57.5	66.5	856	1404	54.3
Mexican-American	51.8	48.3	59.1	48.0	53.6	548		
Family								
Anglo-American	52.8	48.5	58.3	61.3	65.8	872	1386	53.6
Mexican-American	47.4	44.1	53.3	46.2	55.4	514		
Newspaper								
Anglo-American	50.7	46.2	47.0	54.1	61.7	791	1282	49.5
Mexican-American	47.8	45.8	49.2	42.2	48.8	491		
Big Business								
Anglo-American	47.5	42.4	48.3	55.6	59.9	770	1235	47.7
Mexican-American	47.8	41.5	49.6	37.6	43.5	465		
Rich People								
Anglo-American	36.0	39.0	45.1	51.1	58.7	694	1084	41.9
Mexican-American	34.2	40.3	39.7	30.1	41.1	390		
Labor Unions								
Anglo-Americans	32.7	31.7	44.5	50.8	55.8	647	1030	39.8
Mexican-American	29.4	31.8	38.8	36.4	50.0	383		

Total Group N = 2584

Table 5

Rankings of the Frequencies Accorded to the Several Categories of Individuals and Groups by Anglo-American Children

Grade	Policemen	Television Broadcasters	Family	Newspapers	Big Business	Rich People	Labor Unions
4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	1	3	2	5	4	6	7
7	1	3	2	5	4	6	7
8	3	1	2	4	5	6	7

Table 6

Rankings of the Frequencies Accorded to the Several Categories of Individuals and Groups by Mexican-American Children

Grade	Policemen	Television Broadcasters	Family	Newspapers	Big Business	Rich People	Labor Unions
4	1	2	4	4	4	6	7
5	1	2	4	3	5	6	7
6	1	2	3	5	4	6	7
7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	1.5	3	1.5	4	5	6	7

functions of policemen or they lack knowledge about the lawmaking process.

In general, factors associated with ethnicity rather than with social status or level of academic performance seem to account for differences in the responses of the two groups (Figure 232, 233). The Anglo-Americans of high academic performance report with greatest frequencies at successive grade levels perception of the policeman as influencing the process of lawmaking, while their Mexican-American counterparts, who are also of high ability, show the sharpest rate of decline. Since children of the two ethnic groups who are within the category of high academic performance appear to perceive the policeman quite differently, and since these children are already identified as high achievers, the misinformation hypothesis seems to be less plausible in explaining differences.

At successively higher grade levels, larger percentages of Anglo-American than Mexican-American children report that members of their family influence lawmaking "very much or some" (Figure 234). The disparity between the two groups appears to be related more to ethnicity than to either sex of child or social status (Figure 235, 236). However, at all grade levels the Anglo-Americans of upper social status report higher percentages than do children of lower status. At the eighth grade, the children of the several levels of academic performance are clearly differentiated. The Anglo-Americans of high ability report the highest frequencies while the Mexican-Americans of similar ability report the lowest (Figure 237). The children of average ability within each ethnic group report similar percentages, and the pattern is repeated at a lower level of frequency among children of low academic performance.

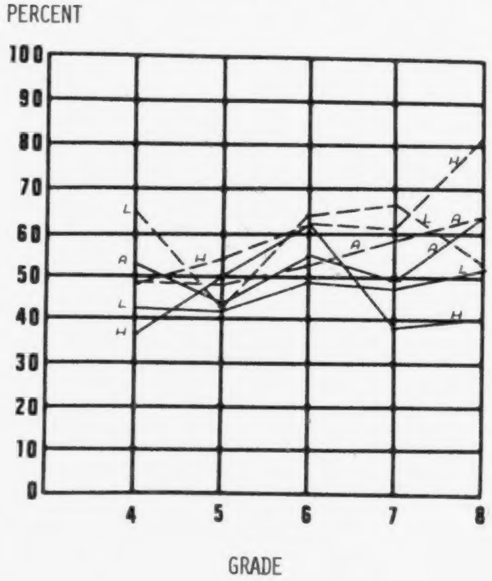
Section Summary

In the first part of this section analyses were made of children's beliefs about citizens' ability to influence government and the procedure through which power can be exercised. It was demonstrated dramatically that Mexican-Americans have very low feelings of political efficacy, and there is no growth in the magnitude of the percentages that are reported over the span of years extending from grade four through eight. On the other hand, the frequencies reported by Anglo-Americans increase steadily at successive grade levels, and this growth is particularly evident among children of upper social status and high level of academic performance. At the same time, fewer Mexican-Americans are developing attitudes about whether or not people are able to influence the decisions of government.

About a third of the children within each ethnic group feel that voting is the only way that their families can influence government. Since such a large percentage of the children report

FIGURE 237

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT THEIR FAMILIES INFLUENCE LAWMAKING VERY MUCH OR SOME, BY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



this response, it probably reflects over-emphasis on the act of voting as a political tool. However, among the Anglo-Americans there is considerable feeling that the vote is not the only instrument which may be employed in influencing government, and the proportion of children who feel this way grows to almost 50% by grades seven and eight. The Mexican-Americans also grow slightly more sophisticated at higher grade levels. The degree of uncertainty, however, is greatest among Mexican-Americans, and it is particularly evident among the girls.

For large proportions of each ethnic group, but particularly for the Mexican-American children, confidence in the vote alone as the principal instrument for exercising political power is indicative of naiveté about political processes. Without greater knowledge of the more subtle and potent ways of influencing decisions, growth in orientations toward political efficacy can scarcely be realized. One avenue for increasing feelings of efficacy among all children is to develop within units of study realistic conceptions of the many legitimate ways in which individuals and groups influence both the decision-makers and those who administer policy.

The power of group effort in achieving political ends is already realized by a majority of the children of each ethnic group. Therefore another avenue for promoting feelings of efficacy is through the study of how groups influence government. It seems likely that after suitable instruction those children who believe that voting is the only way that their families can influence government, and those who just "don't know," should more readily perceive the relationship between group effort and political efficacy. Among the Mexican-Americans, the girls and the children of lower social status should be the principal recipients of such instruction, but in general it could be a valuable experience for all children.

While children have a high degree of awareness of the effectiveness of group effort in achieving political ends, they are extremely naive about the effectiveness of special interest groups in influencing legislation. In general, they feel that ordinary people like members of their own family have approximately the same political power as do the mass media--newspapers and television. A large proportion of the respondents believe that the common citizen has considerable influence over law-making, while smaller percentages of children perceive that big business, wealthy people, and labor unions exercise extensive power.

As Anglo-American children grow older, more and more seem to acquire feelings of efficacy, but this is not true among the Mexican-American. From the perspective of the participant political culture, growth in self-confidence among the Anglo-Americans is desirable, provided that at the same time greater numbers of children also acquire realistic conceptions of the relative power of their families and the several special interest groups. On the other hand, if the percentages of Mexican-American children who report confidence in the efficacy of people like themselves does not increase in frequency among successively older age groups, there will be less likelihood of later involving large numbers of them in the struggle to influence legislation when they are adult.

Probably the most surprising result of this part of the survey is the extent to which children believe that policemen influence the lawmaking process. Even at grade eight approximately 63% of the Anglo-Americans and 55% of the Mexican-Americans associate policemen with lawmaking. While it is possible that children perceive his flexibility in interpreting the law in specific situations as lawmaking, such sophistication is unlikely to be found among such large numbers of children. Therefore it can be assumed that children lack knowledge about the lawmaking process. An hypothesis which might be both interesting and fruitful to explore is that children who perceive policemen favorably as protectors, attribute superior powers to them in very much the same way that young children endow their parents with the ability to do anything.

It is evident that children do not understand the part that special interest groups play in shaping laws and administrative policies. It is suggested therefore that at appropriate grade levels, units of study be designed to help children develop realistic conceptions of the diverse ways in which interest groups affect government, how they influence decisions, and how they sometimes abuse the democratic process.

Notes

1. David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life, pp. 190-211 ff.

2. Ibid., p. 201.

3. This is questionnaire item 49.

4. The data relative to the three ability levels are inconclusive except that Anglo-Americans of high ability report the lowest frequencies and the sharpest decline at successive grade levels. The graphs are not presented.

5. Potential sources of invalidity associated with this type of response are the language and risk taking problems which are discussed in Appendix B.

6. Kenneth Langton and M. Jennings, Political Socialization, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 53.

7. It is anticipated that more intensive analyses will be made at a later date.

8. The percentage variations are so small among Family, Newspapers, and Big Business they can hardly be considered as stable; hence, they are all given the median rank of 4.

Chapter V

Summary and Recommendations

Rationale for Studying Children's Citizenship Learning

This is a study of the political learning of 2,584 children in grades four through eight, inclusive, from schools in three contiguous counties of southern California: Orange, Los Angeles, and Riverside. The purpose of the study is to trace the development of children's orientations toward political objects at successive grade levels and to discern differences between samples of children who are members of two ethnic subgroups: the Mexican-American and Anglo-American. The study builds upon the work of previous investigators who observed the political socialization of children who were drawn for the most part from families of Caucasian ancestry.

Children of both ethnic groups are part of a society whose political norms and expectations require active participation in the political process by its membership in order to influence government and obtain a fair share of its resources. The principal thrust of this study, then, is to determine the degree to which children of each ethnic group are acquiring knowledge and dispositions which are required for exerting influence in a participant-based political culture. In this sense, the study is both evaluative and descriptive of children's political orientations. On the other hand, no attempt is made to link attitudinal or cognitive differences between children of the two ethnic groups to elements within their basic value systems which are either conducive or detrimental to successful political activity. While it would have been of interest to study the process of political socialization and the relative influence of different agencies on the development of political orientations, such enquiries were not possible within the limitations set by the resources which were available.

This research was undertaken with a view toward the practical ends to which the results might be put in the hope that one important agency of socialization, the school, would indeed use the information in developing new curricula. It is apparent that within various Mexican-American communities of the southwest, there is a growing feeling among the populace that they have been excluded from the political process. Without the power which is necessary for influencing political decisions, their rightful share of the available resources cannot be acquired. Lack of political power is partly due to the absence among a large segment of Mexican-Americans of the political knowledge, attitudes, and skills with which to exercise influence on government. These requisites for political behavior can be learned, and since the public school is one important agency of political socialization which is available to all children, an appropriate instrument for citizenship instruction is already on hand.

The task then is to help educational authorities identify children's curricular needs with regard to political affairs and help them acquire insight into the unique needs of the Mexican-American child. Once the needs are identified the objectives of instruction can be formulated and then curricula, materials, and learning experiences can be developed. It is expected that the findings derived through this study may serve as a basic resource for educators who want to build such programs.

With these purposes in mind, data were acquired from children in 28 schools. Within each classroom, a questionnaire was administered to all children orally through a group interview procedure in order to reduce reading problems. Items on the questionnaire were designed to elicit responses along three avenues of inquiry:

1. Knowledge of political information--awareness of leaders, institutions, and roles,
2. Affective orientations toward the structure of authority--government, leaders, and the compliance system,
3. Feelings about the citizenship role--internalization of regime norms associated with political involvement.

The analyses of the cognitive and affective responses within each of the three categories of inquiry are given in Chapters II, III, and IV. The first chapter includes the rationale for this study and presents the central problem, the background of research and theory, and the scope and method of the investigation. Technical information concerning the research process is included in the appendices.

Children's Political Information

This investigation began with the assumption that a competent citizen of the United States must be reasonably well-informed about the nature and functioning of his government and the roles performed by its leaders. Then the specific political information that is possessed by Mexican-American and Anglo-American children was assessed and growth patterns within the two ethnic groups were compared to discern differences in cognitive development. On the basis of results derived through the first part of this investigation, the following assertions can be made:

1. Local mayors, city councilmen and California state legislators are virtually unknown to children, and there is little knowledge about their roles.

2. Although children have some awareness of such leaders as the President, governor, and Congressmen, very little is known about what they do.

3. Knowledge about the functions of Congress, the California State Legislature, and the city council is very limited.

4. Mexican-American children as a group acquire less political knowledge than do the Anglo-American and in many instances differences between the two groups become greater as children progress through the grades.

5. Mexican-American children of both sexes lag behind the Anglo-American in reporting political information, and the Mexican-American girls report the least amount.

6. In general, Mexican-Americans of upper social status do not report as much political information as do their Anglo-American counterparts; instead the amount of information which they report appears to be more on a par with that of the Anglo-Americans of lower status.

7. Mexican-American and Anglo-American children of equal academic performance are not equivalent in the amount of information which they report. Mexican-Americans trail behind Anglo-Americans of similar ability, and the Mexican-Americans within the average and below average categories perform least well.

The results which summarize the first part of the investigation reveal that Mexican-American children are less knowledgeable about the kind of information which was solicited on the questionnaire than are the Anglo-American. The inference which should be drawn from these data is that Mexican-Americans have not learned as much political information or, perhaps, their facility with the English language is such that they cannot report their knowledge as readily. The data do not indicate that these children cannot learn and report as much political information as others if they are provided with sufficient opportunity to acquire this knowledge and are given practice in expressing their thoughts in verbal or in written form, either in English or Spanish. Indeed, the fact that occasionally the Mexican-American children report more information than do the Anglo-American suggests that special circumstances in local schools and communities might uniquely affect their political orientations.

The findings have clear implications for the social studies curriculum. Within the schools sampled and probably within other schools of similar make-up, information about local and state government is virtually nonexistent throughout the first eight grades; therefore, appropriate instructional units should be developed and implemented. While there is more information reported about the functions of government on the national than on the state and local levels, the ethnic group and social class differences which were observed suggest that the unique needs of these children must be given careful consideration in curriculum development and instructional planning.

Since the curriculum needs which are suggested involve cognitive aspects of the political process, schoolmen need not feel uncomfortable about getting the school involved in politics. They need only develop relevant programs of study about civics and citizenship, principles of the Constitution, and the nature of state and local government. These studies were recommended by the California State Legislature and have been incorporated in the Education Code. Failure to do so, however, could have serious consequences for the future of members of the Mexican-American community. Many of the Mexican-Americans of lower social status and ability who are potential high school dropouts are likely to grow to adulthood without an adequate cognitive base for effective participation in state and local political affairs. Hence, they will not be able to take full advantage of the political process in fulfilling their needs. The prognosis is similar for Anglo-Americans of low academic performance. On the other hand, the children of upper social status from both ethnic groups, and those who are average and above average in academic performance, are likely to acquire additional information about the political system in high school, in post-secondary school study, or through other agencies of socialization. Therefore, the probability of their acquiring the fund of information and insights which are necessary for effective participation in the political process is much greater.

Feelings Toward the Structure of Authority

In Chapter III, children's affective orientations toward the structure of authority were studied. First analyses were made of the feelings children expressed concerning the responsiveness of government to the problems of individuals and the sensitivity of leaders to what the people think. This was followed by examinations of children's evaluations of particular leaders: the President, the governor, and the several local mayors. Finally, children's feelings about the compliance system were analyzed to provide insight into their attitudes toward the police, judge, and the law. At several points comparisons were also made between some of the findings of previous investigations and the results derived through this study.

Throughout the third chapter comparisons were made to find out if children of the two ethnic groups vary in their feelings about the authority system. The conclusion that they do indeed differ can be asserted forcefully. In particular, the Mexican-American children of lower socioeconomic status are highly cynical about the responsiveness of government and elected officials, and they tend to feel alienated from the system. A large proportion of Mexican-American children anticipate unfair treatment from both policemen and judges. The older children of both ethnic groups become more and more convinced that laws are not universally fair, and this attitude is expressed to an even greater degree by the Anglo-Americans. The rate of attitude acquisition is lower among the Mexican-Americans. They express considerable doubt about their relationship to the structure of authority through the 'don't know' category of response. Only a few children within each ethnic group acquire the concept that law is a requirement for effective government.

If one can assume that attitudes which are learned early are generally pervasive and will affect later behavior, then it must also be expected that the tendencies toward cynicism and alienation which are characteristic of Mexican-American children of lower social status will also affect their later relationship to the political system. Apathy and withdrawal from political activity by some Mexican-American adults can reduce their chances of acquiring a fair share of resources from government. The possibility also exists that much tension and needless waste of energy will occur because of frustrations which may be generated by either the absence of political power or the lack of knowledge about the inner workings of the system. In view of these possibilities educational authorities are encouraged to accept the challenge of developing curricula which are relevant to the political needs of children; although of course even under the best of school programs there will be no certainty of success.

It would be difficult to develop programs which seek to offset feelings of cynicism and tendencies toward alienation without directing considerable attention to how government in America actually works. Traditionally schools have concentrated on descriptions of the structure of government in general and how it is supposed to function ideally within a democratic system--without much concern for its inner workings. Indeed, except among those who have spent years in political life or those who specialize in the study of government, there are probably few persons who really understand how the several levels of government actually function. However, enough is known about political leaders and their sensitivity to the power of group influence, their attitudes toward sources of support, and their high regard for communications from constituents which adequately express local needs to provide children with valuable knowledge about the procedures for making influence felt and the channels through which to work in order to promote change. In addition, much is also known about the function of bargain and compromise in the legislative process which reduces the chances of ever achieving political goals completely. This too will provide children with insight into the political realities which confront legislators.

The elementary and junior high school must include within its program study and discussion of important aspects of the compliance system and, in particular, the function of law and how it is administered. There is little comprehension about the relationship between law and government, and there is no growth in such understanding as children get older. Indeed, large proportions of the Mexican-American children do not perceive the law as protective, the very young children of both ethnic groups do not view the policeman as a 'community helper', and many Mexican-Americans are cynical about receiving fair treatment from both policemen and judges. This is a challenge which must be faced by legal as well as by school authorities.

Legal authorities rather than school officials probably face the more difficult task. For while the school can concern itself principally with the cognitive elements of the compliance system, it is up to the police and the courts to find ways of developing more favorable attitudes toward themselves. Perhaps the police already have an instrument which they might well employ successfully: children express a high degree of confidence that they will receive help from an individual policeman in time of need; therefore, programs designed to generalize this feeling to the more abstract concept of police might prove to be effective.

Orientation Toward the Citizenship Role

In Chapter IV, children's orientations toward the citizenship role were analyzed. Since this role involves participation in decision-making, the individual must learn how to influence government. There are patterns of political behavior which are commonly accepted in the participant culture because they are necessary for the successful functioning of the system. These behavioral expectations, rules, and arrangements may be designated as the regime norms. Within the fourth chapter, analyses were made of norms which are associated with political involvement and feelings about political efficacy.

The analysis of intentions to vote revealed that although large numbers of children accept this behavior, greater percentages of the Mexican-Americans appear to be apathetic, and this is particularly evident among those of lower social status. Fewer of the Mexican-Americans expressed interest in affiliating themselves with a party, and at the same time more of them--especially the girls--showed little growth in knowledge about the meaning of political party. Since party preference is transmitted in large measure through the family, this apparent disinterest on the part of Mexican-Americans is probably also related to lack of awareness of their parents' party loyalty. At the same time that smaller numbers of Mexican-Americans are developing party loyalty, fewer of them are internalizing the concept of independence in voting. While this seems to be particularly true of the Mexican-American girls, it is also characteristic of the Anglo-American girls.

Identification of party leaders and political issues is a difficult task for all children. Mexican-American girls seem to have the greatest difficulty in identifying party leaders, and this is true also for children of both sexes who are of lower social status. Indeed, even for the three groupings of high, average, and low academic performance, there is little difference among the Mexican-Americans. Identifying and describing political issues seem to be no more difficult for children than naming leaders, although for each task the relatively small frequencies of response indicate that children seldom react to political stimuli.

Children may not react often to political stimuli because agencies of socialization, including the school, seem more concerned with promoting system support than political involvement. However, the curriculum can be changed. Children can be introduced to content and experience which might increase the extent to which they react to political affairs. More attention can be given to citizenship expectations that are associated with political involvement, information about leaders of parties, the study of political issues, and the discussion of the concept of legitimacy of government roles. It would be desirable to increase the cognitive learning and political sensitivity of all groups of children, however, meeting the needs of the Mexican-American girls and the children of lower social status should be given priority.

Besides analysis of the extent to which norms associated with political involvement are internalized by children, feelings of efficacy were also examined. It was demonstrated dramatically that among the Mexican-American children there is little confidence in the power of citizens to influence government, and no increment in growth is observed as children proceed through the grades. On the other hand, growth in feelings of efficacy among the Anglo-Americans increases substantially! Many children believe that the individual vote is the only way to influence government, but in this respect the Anglo-Americans seem to be more aware than Mexican-Americans that other political instruments are available.

Children of each ethnic group have considerable confidence in the power of group effort in achieving political ends, but they are extremely naive about the degree to which special interest groups influence legislation. Large numbers of children are willing to believe, for example, that ordinary people like members of their own family can influence legislation to a greater extent than can business associations and labor unions. At the same time, children appear to lack accurate knowledge about the legislative process and the part that policemen play in making the laws. Many children seem to have very little information about the function of the policeman in the community.

In order to help children become more aware of the norms which are associated with political involvement, it is recommended that at appropriate grade levels, units of study be constructed which include:

1. the role of the political party in the American system of government and the potential ability of the independent vote to upset a power balance.

2. the practical considerations which lead people to make particular decisions about voting.

3. background information about leaders of political parties and their positions on a variety of important issues.

4. the relationship between system stability and attitudes toward legitimacy, including the procedures which are available for registering opposition and promoting change.

To promote feelings of efficacy among all children, but particularly among the Mexican-American, it is suggested that a pattern of learning experiences be developed which will:

1. develop understanding about the diverse groups which are organized for particular purposes--political, economic, and social,

2. provide realistic images of the many ways in which individuals and groups influence both the lawmaking process and the administration of policy,

3. depict realistically the legislative process at several levels of government, and

4. portray accurately the function of policemen in American communities.

The Role of Citizen and Subject

In summarizing the results of this enquiry, the investigator has accentuated the need to design innovative school curricula to help children acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills which will enable them to function effectively as citizens within the participant political culture. However, along with the evidence which suggests that greater emphasis should be given to the citizenship role, there is important information which indicates that agencies of socialization may place too much stress upon the subject role: compliance with rules and regulations. This is apparent by examining the responses to one of the questionnaire items:

> "Suppose the mayor came to your school to give a prize to the child who is the best citizen. Check the one child that he would choose as the best citizen."

	Number of responses
1. Someone who does what he is told	486
2. Someone who gets good grades	221
3. Someone who is elected to plan things for the school	190
4. Someone who everybody likes	125
5. Someone who always obeys the rules	1,403
6. I don't know what citizen means	73
No response	86
Total:	2,584

The pattern of response becomes clearer when the tallies within each category are converted to percentages and rearranged in order of rank from high to low:

1. Someone who always obeys the rules	54%
2. Someone who does what he is told	19
3. Someone who gets good grades	8
4. Someone who is elected to plan things for the school	7
5. Someone who everybody likes	5
6. I don't know what citizen means	3
7. No response	3
Total:	99%

It can be observed readily that the two highest categories of response are concerned with compliance with rules and the commands of persons in authority. While obedience to law and

FIGURE 238

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE GOOD CITIZEN
ALWAYS OBEYS THE RULES

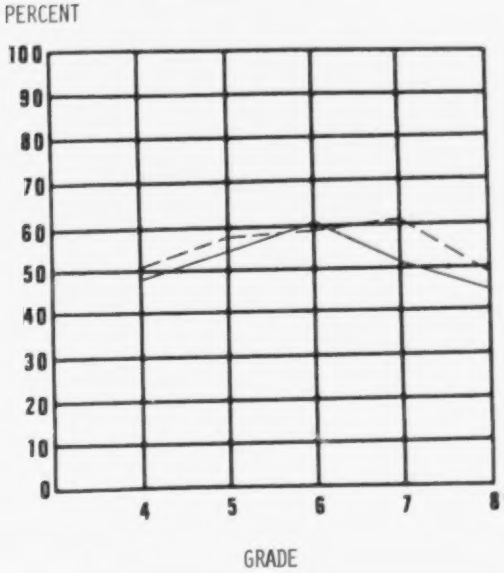
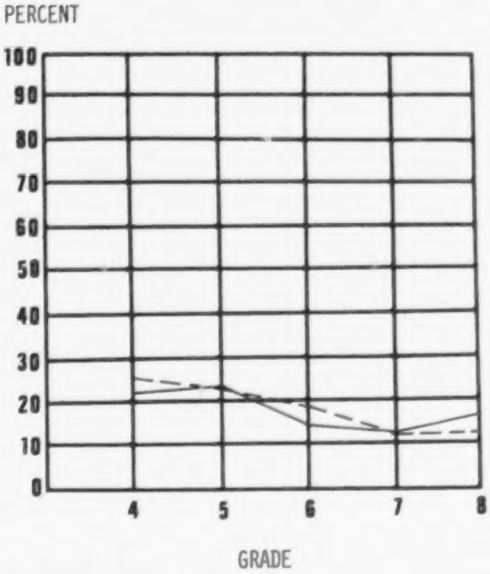


FIGURE 239

CHILDREN REPORTING THAT
THE GOOD CITIZEN
DOES WHAT HE IS TOLD



authority is important in the participant culture and also in the school environment where hundreds of energetic children must live, work, and play together for many hours, it is significant to observe that there is little change in the frequency of the responses at successive grade levels. This is demonstrated in Figures 238 and 239. The percentages of response are relatively consistent over the span of grades included in this study, and there appear to be no great ethnic differences.

In closing this report with the brief discussion of the child's concept of the good citizen, the investigator does not intend to suggest or imply that instruction relative to the subject role be eliminated from the school curriculum; rather, it is strongly advised that more emphasis be given to aspects of the citizen role which involve the art of effective participation, the desire to take an active part in government, and the responsibility to assume leadership.

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APPENDIX A

Characteristics of the Population Sampled

Socioeconomic Status

A preliminary discussion of the scope and method of this investigation is given in Chapter I. Additional information about selected attributes of the population which was sampled and characteristics of the research instrument will be discussed in Appendices A and B. On the questionnaire the children were asked to check their age, year in school, sex, and language spoken in the home. An index of socioeconomic status was constructed through use of the child's description of the occupation of his parents. Additional information about his ethnic background, level of academic achievement, and school citizenship performance was supplied by the teacher.

Children's descriptions of the occupation of their parents were grouped into three categories: unskilled and semi-skilled, skilled and technical, and white collar and professional. In order to develop proficiency in classifying the several occupations, a generous sample of questionnaires was first reviewed, and then three judges attempted to place each occupation into the designated categories. After comparing their individual ratings, the reasons for any inconsistencies in judgment were discussed, and concensus was reached about the appropriate classification for a given occupation. Finally, one judge assumed the task of rating the occupations which were reported on the entire set of questionnaires. In a few instances, children in the lower grades left the space for this write-in response blank, and in such cases an attempt was made to estimate socioeconomic status on the basis of the neighborhood in which the school is located and the language which is spoken in the home.

Table A.1 presents information about the number of children who are included in the sample, classified by grade, socioeconomic status, and ethnic background. Since questionnaires were administered to children in schools that are located primarily in lower social status neighborhoods, it was expected that greater numbers of parents would be employed in occupations involving unskilled and semi-skilled manual labor. Consequently, a smaller proportion of the sample consists of children whose parents are employed in skilled, technical, white collar and professional occupations. Table A.2 shows that this is particularly characteristic of the Mexican-Americans. In Table A.1 the two categories, "skilled and technical" and "white collar and professional," are combined to form the classification which is designated as upper socioeconomic status. Although the number of Mexican-American children who are included in the upper status category is still rather small, the information is helpful in the

Table A.1

Estimate of the Number of Children
Included in Each Category of Socioeconomic Status

	Lower SES		Upper SES				Upper SES		
Grade	Manual, Unskilled and Semi-skilled		Skilled and Technical		White Collar and Professional		Combined Skilled, Technical, White Collar, Professional		Total
	M-A	A-A	M-A	A-A	M-A	A-A	M-A	A-A	
4	191	203	26	68	11	68	37	136	567
5	188	198	35	77	13	69	48	146	580
6	193	138	39	87	10	94	49	181	561
7	133	91	32	74	8	101	40	175	439
8	129	108	26	59	13	102	39	161	437
Totals	834	738	158	365	55	434	213	799	2584

Table A.2

Estimate of the Number and Percentage
of Children Included in Each Category of Socioeconomic Status

Grade	Lower SES			Upper SES			Total Sample
	Mexican-American	Anglo-American	Total	Mexican-American	Anglo-American	Total	
4	191	203	394	37	136	173	567
5	188	198	386	48	146	194	580
6	193	138	331	49	181	230	561
7	133	91	224	40	175	215	439
8	129	108	237	39	161	200	437
Totals	834	738	1572	213	799	1012	2584
Percentages	53.0	46.9	99.9	21.0	78.9	99.9	

analysis of the data when the frequencies are converted to percentages.

Level of Academic Performance

Since the child's name was not recorded on the questionnaire, a system was devised for obtaining information about his ethnic background and an estimate of his academic achievement. Each questionnaire was coded on the last page with an individual number for each child. All teachers were provided in advance with sets of the numbered questionnaires and a summary class information sheet for recording the name, questionnaire number, and the desired information about each child. On the day that the instrument was to be administered, the teacher gave each child the questionnaire whose number corresponded to his name. In order to preserve the anonymity of the responses, the teachers were given the option of cutting off and destroying the left hand margin of the summary class information sheet which contained the names of students. When this option was exercised, all the necessary information about the student was available to the researcher except his name, and this identification was of no particular importance in the analysis of results.

An attempt was made to establish and preserve the reliability of the teachers' ratings of children's academic performance by using a scale which is based upon the estimated average standing of children in all subjects of the curriculum:

1. above average: six or more months above grade level,

2. average: between five months above grade level and five months below grade level, and

3. below average: six or more months below grade level.

It is recognized, of course, that this scale is rather crude and teachers probably varied both in their interpretation of its meaning and the extent to which they adhered to it. Yet, it is useful for purposes of this study and was the only feasible way to obtain this information.

Table A.3 provides information about the teachers' estimates of children's academic performance. It should be noted that Mexican-American children who are judged to be of high academic performance comprise a very small part of the sample. However, the responses of children in this subgroup are very important for this study in order to allow comparisons to be made between ethnic groups when level of ability is held constant. Therefore, although the numbers are small, useful comparative data are provided when the frequencies are converted to percentages.

Table A.3

Teachers' Estimates of Children's Academic Performance

Grade	High Academic Performance		Average Academic Performance		Low Academic Performance		Total		
	Mexican-American	Anglo-American	Mexican-American	Anglo-American	Mexican-American	Anglo-American	Mexican-American	Anglo-American	Both Groups
4	22	90	110	165	96	84	228	339	567
5	30	84	116	167	90	93	236	344	580
6	29	108	114	149	98	62	241	319	560
7	29	79	83	128	59	58	171	265	436
8	15	69	73	149	79	51	167	269	436
Total	125	430	496	758	422	348	1043	1536	2579*
Percentage**	11.9	27.9	47.5	49.3	41.4	22.6			

* The total sum does not equal 2584 because of blank or unusable responses.
** The percentages given within categories are of the total of each ethnic group.

Ethnicity

The two terms which are used in this study to differentiate the responses of children according to their ethnic background should be elaborated upon further. The term Mexican-American refers to Spanish-surnamed children who have been designated by their teachers as belonging to this ethnic group. It is recognized that in the southwestern area of the United States there are many persons of Spanish surname who are American citizens and who want to be considered only as Americans. Other persons who designate themselves as American also acknowledge their Spanish origins, history, and culture and refer to themselves as Spanish-American. Still others consider themselves to be Americans of Mexican descent and want to be referred to as Mexican-Americans. Additional terminology is also used, such as Chicano or members of La Raza. Regardless of how they identify themselves, members of the dominant Anglo-American subculture usually refer to these people as Mexican-Americans and sometimes even as Mexicans, although a small proportion of them might actually be of Cuban, Puerto Rican, Philippine, Central American, or South American origin.

The term Anglo-American is also used in a special way. Besides identifying the Mexican-American children, teachers were also asked to designate Anglo-American, black children, and "Others"--consisting mostly of children of Chinese and Japanese ancestry. The Anglo-Americans, then, are members of the dominant culture who are principally of Anglo-Saxon background, but there are also included in this group children who are descendants of immigrants from all countries of Europe, the Scandinavian peninsula, and the Mediterranean area. This undifferentiated group is generally referred to as "Anglo" by the Mexican-American community. Information about the ethnic composition of the sample by grade and sex of child is presented as Table A.4.

Table A.4

Ethnic Composition of the Sample*

Grade	Mexican-American			Anglo-American			Total Sample
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
4	130	98	228	168	171	339	567
5	111	125	236	176	168	344	580
6	139	103	242	156	163	319	561
7	90	83	173	136	130	266	439
8	85	83	168	164	105	269	437
Totals	555	492	1047	800	737	1537	2584
Percentage			40.5			59.4	99.9

*Omitted from this table are the black children and those categorized as "Other."

APPENDIX B

Characteristics of the Research Instrument

Type of Items

The type of item which is used on the questionnaire varies according to the dimension of political orientation that is measured. For assessing cognitive ability such as knowledge of the name of the local mayor and his function in the community, a direct question is asked. The task for the student is to produce the written response in the blank space which is provided. The "free response" characteristic of this item form enhances its validity and potentiality for measurement of higher levels of response as compared to a recognition type of item, but it also presents certain drawbacks as well. Some children who have the knowledge with which to make an appropriate response might fail to do so because of their reluctance to write, their difficulty in expressing themselves in writing, or their inability to spell correctly. This type of item also handicaps the child who is a 'perfectionist' or the one who is unwilling to take a chance. Since there are 15 items of this form included in the questionnaire which represent a total of 18 responses, the assessments of cognitive ability are likely to be underestimates of the content of the children's knowledge and thoughts about political phenomena.

For most of the remaining questionnaire items, children are required to express an opinion when a stimulus question and several response options are provided. Although children are usually asked to indicate the intensity with which they hold this opinion, their responses are limited to those choices which are given on the questionnaire. The "forced-choice" form of such item types facilitates scoring but limits responses to the stimuli which are presented. This item form might encourage frivolous or glib responses which are checked without genuine conviction. One approach to discerning the reliability of the responses would be to correlate pairs of similar items or groups of related items to determine their stability or internal consistency. It is anticipated that such reliability studies will be made in subsequent analyses of the data.

The written responses to items on the questionnaire also had to be coded. For each response where a local or national leader was to be named there was generally little difficulty in verifying its correctness against official records. However, with regard to descriptions of the functions of officials or differences between political parties, problems in determining the adequacy of the response arose. After surveying some of the written statements that were supplied by children, descriptions were made of sample categories which would constitute varying degrees of adequacy of response. One person read and scored the items. In order to establish a high degree of reliability in the scoring, several hundred instruments were at first judged separately by several persons. Then, ratings were compared and differences in judgment were discussed. After the rater developed proficiency in scoring, the responses on the first set of instruments were rescored along with the remaining questionnaires.

The Question of Validity

The discussion of methodology would be incomplete without devoting some attention to the validity of the instrument and the relevance of the concepts which are employed in the study. The items on the questionnaire seek to elicit responses about a variety of cognitions and feelings toward political objects; however, the investigator does not suggest that in sum they comprise a definition of the good citizen. Many items purport to assess political information, evaluation of leaders, and children's feelings about the responsiveness of government and leaders. Other items are concerned with attitude toward law, authority, government, partisan commitment, political involvement, and political efficacy. These categories of response encompass information and feelings which are assumed to be important elements within the participant political culture.

There are two types of items included in the questionnaire. They require children either to write answers to questions or select one of a limited number of alternatives. In both instances, the information which they provide consists of sets of written words, statements, and check-marks. Items such as these present the child with stimuli requiring task performances which are relatively simple compared to the complex pattern of political orientations which they seek to tap. The rather limited responses are then interpreted within the broader context of political orientation; that is, inferences based upon this behavior are made about cognitions and feelings toward political objects.

On what basis might some degree of confidence in the validity of the questionnaire be generated? Since the study seeks to discern differences in the political orientations of two ethnic groups, any differences that are actually found between the responses of Mexican-American and Anglo-American children would be suggestive of the validity of the particular items. If in addition certain findings can be logically related to the results of other similar studies, the validity of at least parts of the instrument would be enhanced further.

The concepts that are employed in exploring differences in political orientations should be examined also for relevance. Suppose a child does indeed name a mayor and describe his duties, reports that he will rally behind the winner of an election although his preferred candidate lost, indicates that he can influence government, and says that he will support a political party and vote when he is an adult. Is he then adequately socialized in the participant political culture?

The folklore of American democracy suggests that virtually all of the concepts which are employed in this study and in many of the similar studies which preceeded it, are useful for understanding or explaining, partially, the stability and successful functioning of a participant-based political culture. Nevertheless, there is as yet little empirical evidence upon which to base claims for the validity of these concepts. For the most part, therefore, they must be accepted at face value because they appear to be germane and are accepted broadly among scholars who study the process of political socialization.

The investigation of political attitudes and democracy in five nations which was conducted by Almond and Verba exemplifies the kinds of cross-national studies which might eventually lead to empirical validation of some of the concepts that are employed in political socialization research:

> If one can...show, for instance, that in the more stable democracies there does exist a particular set of political attitudes that could theoretically further the chances of stable democracy; or that in those nations where participation is most frequent there does in fact exist a particular set of interpersonal attitudes that could theoretically further political participation, then one has come a long way toward demonstrating the probability of some connection between attitudinal patterns and systemic qualities.[1]

Not only might the cross-national studies indicate whether or not relationships exist between particular patterns of cognitions, attitudes and behavior on the one hand and the stability and effectiveness of the system on the other, but analyses within nations can provide additional information. Suppose, for example, that attitudes toward political efficacy are more prevalent in a participant-based political system than in some other, and if one then analyzes that system and discovers that people who report this attitude more frequently also attempt to influence political decisions more often, then evidence would be available which supports the validity of the assertion that political efficacy is an essential part of the participant political culture.

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1. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, op. cit., p. 43.

APPENDIX C

The Research Instrument

Please answer some questions about yourself.

1. How old are you? Circle your age.

9 10 11 12 13 14

2. What grade are you in? Circle your grade.

4 5 6 7 8

3. Circle whether you are a boy or a girl.

boy girl

4. Put a check mark next to each of the following clubs or organizations to which you belong or have belonged in the past.

1. not any 1________
2. Boy Scouts or Cub Scouts 2________
3. Girl Scouts or Brownies 3________
4. Campfire Girls 4________
5. YMCA, YWCA, YMHA, H-Y 5________
6. CYO 6________
7. Boys' Club 7________
8. 4-H Club 8________
9. LULAC 9________
10. other (write in) 10________

5. Do you belong to a school group such as a club, band, chorus, patrol squad, or other service group? Check one

1. Yes 1________
2. No 2________

6. What language do your parents prefer to speak to each other most of the time? Check one

   1. English only 1________
   2. Spanish only 2________
   3. English and Spanish 3________
   4. Another language (write in) 4________
   5. English and another language (write in) 5________

7. How long have your parents lived in California? Check one

   1. Less than 2 years 1________
   2. Between 2 and 10 years 2________
   3. More than 10 years, or were born here 3________

8. What kind of work does your father do?

   ____

9. If your mother works away from home, what does she do?

   ____

10. How often do you read a news story on the front page of a newspaper? Check one

   1. Several times a week 1________
   2. Once a week 2________
   3. Once in a while 3________
   4. Never 4________

11. How often do you watch a news program on TV? Check one

1. Several times a week	1______
2. Once a week	2______
3. Once in a while	3______
4. Never	4______

12.

A. Name a famous person you want to be like:

____

B. Name a well-known adult you don't want to be like:

____

13. Read this list of people and put a check mark next to the three who are most important. Check three

1. Mayor of a city	1______
2. School teacher	2______
3. Judge	3______
4. President of the country	4______
5. Doctor	5______
6. Police Chief	6______
7. A religious leader like a priest, minister or rabbi	7______
8. School principal	8______

14. Who is the President of the United States? ______________

15. Write one thing that the President does:

____

16. What kind of a job has the President been doing?

Check one

1. A good job 1______
2. A fair job 2______
3. A bad job 3______
4. I don't know 4______

17. If you needed some help and wrote to the President about your trouble, would he try to help you? Check one

1. He would help very much 1______
2. He would help a lot 2______
3. He would help very little 3______
4. He would not help at all 4______
5. I don't know 5______

18. Have you heard of the United States Senate or the House of Representatives? Check one

1. Yes 1______
2. No 2______

19. Write the name of one person who is a member of the Senate or the House of Representatives: ______________

20. Write one thing that the United States Senate or House of Representatives does: ______________

21. Who is the Governor of California? ______________

22. Write one thing that the Governor does: ______________

____

23. What kind of job has the Governor been doing? Check one

1. A good job 1________
2. A fair job 2________
3. A bad job 3________
4. I don't know 4________

24. If you needed some help and wrote to the Governor about your trouble, would he try to help you? Check one

1. He would help very much 1________
2. He would help a lot 2________
3. He would help very little 3________
4. He would not help at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

25. Have you heard of the California State Legislature?

Check one

1. Yes 1________
2. No 2________

26. Write the name of one person who is a member of the California State Legislature: ______________________________

27. Write one thing that the California State Legislature does:

____

28. Who is the mayor of ________________? ________________

29. Write one thing that the Mayor does:

____

30. What kind of job has the Mayor been doing? Check one

1. A good job 1________
2. A fair job 2________
3. A bad job 3________
4. I don't know 4________

31. If you needed some help and wrote to the Mayor about your trouble, would he try to help you? Check one

1. He would help very much 1________
2. He would help a lot 2________
3. He would help very little 3________
4. He would not help at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

32. Have you heard of the City Council? Check one

1. Yes 1________
2. No 2________

33. Write the name of one person on the City Council:

____

34. Write one thing that the City Council does:

____

35. How much does the government care about the troubles of people like your family? Check one

1. It cares very much 1________
2. It cares a lot 2________
3. It cares very little 3________
4. It does not care at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

36. How much does the government care about what people like your family think? Check one

1. It cares very much 1________
2. It cares a lot 2________
3. It cares very little 3________
4. It does not care at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

37. How often does the government do what is right? Check one

1. Almost always 1________
2. Most of the time 2________
3. Not very often 3________
4. Never 4________
5. I don't know 5________

38. If you think that a policeman is wrong in what he tells you to do, what would you do? Check one

1. Do what he tells you to do and forget about it 1________
2. Do what he tells you but tell your parents about it 2________
3. Do what he tells you but ask the policeman why 3________
4. Do what he tells you but tell the policeman that he is wrong 4________
5. I would not do what he told me 5________

39. What is the most important reason why we have laws?

Check one

1. To punish people 1_______
2. To run the country 2_______
3. To keep people safe 3_______
4. To keep people from doing bad things 4_______
5. I don't know 5_______

40. What is the most important thing a policeman does?

Check one

1. Makes people obey the laws 1_______
2. Helps people who are in trouble 2_____
3. Catches people who break the law 3_______

41. If a policeman knew that you needed some help, what would he do?

Check one

1. He would help very much 1_______
2. He would help a lot 2_______
3. He would help very little 3_______
4. He would not help at all 4_______
5. I don't know 5_______

42. Not all grownups vote at election time. Will you vote when you are old enough?

Check one

1. Yes 1_______
2. No 2_______
3. I don't know 3_______
4. I do not know what voting means 4______

43. Do you think it is important for you to support a political party when you are grown up? Check one

1. Yes 1________

2. No 2________

3. I don't know 3________

4. I do not know what political party means 4________

44. Do you know for which party either one of your parents sometimes votes? (Don't write in the party) Check one

1. Yes 1________

2. No 2________

45. Young people should decide to belong to the same political party as their parents. Check one

1. Yes 1________

2. No 2________

46. NAME SOME PEOPLE:

A. Who do you think is a famous Democrat?

____

B. Who do you think is a famous Republican?

____

C. Who is a famous person from another party?

____

47. Suppose your favorite candidate for President loses an election. Should a person who voted for the loser try to help the winner do a good job running the government?

		Check one
1.	He should help all he can	1________
2.	He should help a lot	2________
3.	He should help a little	3________
4.	He should not help at all	4________
5.	I don't know	5________

48. Write what you think is the difference between the Democrats and Republicans: ____

____

49. If you were old enough to vote, whom would you vote for?

		Check one
1.	Republicans	1________
2.	Democrats	2________
3.	Some other party	3________
4.	Sometimes one, sometimes another	4________
5.	I don't know	5________

50. If you were old enough to vote, who would you ask for advice about voting?

		Check one
1.	Father	1________
2.	Mother	2________
3.	Brother or Sister	3________
4.	Teacher	4________
5.	A Friend	5________

6. A Religious Leader, like a minister, priest or rabbi 6______

7. I would make up my own mind 7______

8. Someone else (write in) 8______

DURING THE RECENT ELECTIONS:

51. I watched a man on TV who was running for an office.

Check one

1. Yes 1______

2. No 2______

52. I took the side of one of the men who was running for an office. Check one

1. Yes 1______

2. No 2______

53. I talked with my parents about a man who was running for an office. Check one

1. Yes 1______

2. No 2______

54. I talked with my friends about a man who was running for an office. Check one

1. Yes 1______

2. No 2______

55. I wore a button for my party or candidate. Check one

1. Yes 1______

2. No 2______

56. I gave out information about my party or candidate.

Check one

1. Yes 1_______

2. No 2_______

57. I did some other thing. (Please write in)

____

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK EACH OF THESE PROBLEMS IS FOR OUR COUNTRY TODAY?

58. Making sure that all of our people have equal rights.

Check one

1. I don't know 1_______

2. Not a very important problem 2_______

3. A problem of some importance 3_______

4. A very important problem 4_______

59. Making sure that all people who have enough money can live where they want to.

Check one

1. I don't know 1_______

2. Not a very important problem 2_______

3. A problem of some importance 3_______

4. A very important problem 4_______

60. Making sure that all people can say whether the Government is right or wrong.

Check one

1. I don't know 1_______

2. Not a very important problem 2_______

3. A problem of some importance 3_______

4. A very important problem 4_______

61. Making sure that people can hold outdoor meetings in public places if they don't cause trouble.

	Check one
1. I don't know	1_______
2. Not a very important problem	2_______
3. A problem of some importance	3_______
4. A very important problem	4_______

CIRCLE ONE ANSWER IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

62. The American Flag is the best flag in the world.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

63. All laws are fair. YES NO I DON'T KNOW

64. America is the best country in the world.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

65. People in other countries think that their own country is the best country in the world.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

66. Most people I know are treated fairly by policemen.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

67. Most people I know are treated fairly by judges.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

68. Most people I know are not helped by the government because they can't work together to get what they want.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

69. My family has a lot of say about what the government does.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

70. What happens in the government will happen no matter what people do. There is nothing people can do to change what the government does. YES NO I DON'T KNOW

71. If people work together they will have a better chance of getting what they want from the government.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

72. Voting is the only way that people like my mother and father can have any say about how the government runs things. YES NO I DON'T KNOW

HOW MUCH DO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE DECIDE WHICH LAWS ARE MADE FOR US?

73. Rich people

	Check one
1. Very much	1_______
2. Some	2_______
3. Very little	3_______
4. Not at all	4_______
5. I don't know	5_______

74. People like my family

	Check one
1. Very much	1_______
2. Some	2_______
3. Very little	3_______
4. Not at all	4_______
5. I don't know	5_______

75. Labor Unions Check one

1. Very much 1________
2. Some 2________
3. Very little 3________
4. Not at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

76. People who publish newspapers Check one

1. Very much 1________
2. Some 2________
3. Very little 3________
4. Not at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

77. People who broadcast TV programs Check one

1. Very much 1________
2. Some 2________
3. Very little 3________
4. Not at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

78. Policemen Check one

1. Very much 1________
2. Some 2________
3. Very little 3________
4. Not at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

79. Big business companies like those that manufacture automobiles or space ships

Check one

1. Very much 1________
2. Some 2________
3. Very little 3________
4. Not at all 4________
5. I don't know 5________

80. When we say the Pledge of Allegiance, we say it:

Check one

1. To our Country 1________
2. To God 2________
3. To the President 3________
4. To the Flag 4________

81. Put a check mark beside the one that explains best what the Pledge of Allegiance is like. It is like:

1. saying a prayer for our Country 1________
2. saying that our flag is best 2________
3. saying that our Country is best 3________
4. saying that we will help and support our Country 4________

82. Suppose the mayor came to your school to give a prize to the child who is the best citizen.

Check the one child that he would choose as the best citizen.

1. Someone who does what he is told 1_______
2. Someone who gets good grades 2_______
3. Someone who is elected to plan things for the school 3_______
4. Someone who everybody likes 4_______
5. Someone who always obeys the rules 5_______
6. I don't know what citizen means 6_______

83. Some people would like to be Governor, Senator, Mayor or Councilman. Why do you think these people would like to have these jobs? Check one

1. They want to change things 1_______
2. They want to make a lot of money 2_______
3. They want to make other people do what they say 3_______
4. They want to help other people 4_______
5. I don't know 5_______